THE
WORKS
Of the Learned
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Publiſhed
By the Reverend Dr. *TILLOTSON*,
Arch-Biſhop of *CANTERBURY*.

The Third Volume,
CONTAINING
Forty Five SERMONS, upon ſeveral Occaſions.
Completing His Engliſh WORKS.

LONDON,
Printed by *J. R.* for *Brabazon Aylmer*, at the *Three Pigeons*, over-againſt the *Royal Exchange*, in *Cornhill*. 1692.

The Contents.

SERM. I.

OF doing all in the Name of Christ.

COLOSS. III. 17.

And whatsoever ye do in word, or in deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus. pag. 1.

SERM. II.

Of being Imitatours of Christ.

1 COR. IV. 16.

I beseech you be followers; or, I exhort you be imitatours of me p. 13.

SERM. III.

Abiding in Christ *to be demonstrated by walking as* Christ *did.*

1 JOHN II. 6.

He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk as he walked p. 7.

SERM. IV.

Of Submission to the Divine Will.

LUKE XXII. 42.

Nevertheless let not my will, but thine be done. p. 35.

SERM. V, VI, VII, VIII, IX.

Of Contentment.

PHIL. IV. 11.

I have learned in whatever state I am, therewith to be content. p. 44, 56, 63, 74, 88.

SERM. X.

Of Patience.

1 PET. II. 21.

Because also Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps. p. 99.

SERM. XI.

Rejoyce evermore.

1 THESS. V. 16.

Rejoice evermore. p. 112.

The CONTENTS.

SERM. XII, XIII.

Keep thy Heart with all diligence, &c.

PROV. IV. 23.

Keep thy heart with all diligence, &c. p. 121, 128.

SERM. XIV, XV.

The Conſideration of our Latter End.

PSAL. XC. 12.

So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto Wiſdom. p. 140, 153.

SERM. XVI, XVII.

The danger and miſchief of delaying Repentance.

PSAL. CXIX. 60.

I made haſte, and delayed not to keep thy Commandments. p. 165, 175

SERM. XVIII, XIX.

Of Induſtry in General.

ECCLES. IX. 10.

Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might. p. 184, 195.

SERM. XX, XXI, XXII.

Of Induſtry in our general Calling, as Chriſtians, as Gentlemen, as Scholars.

ROM. XII. 11.

Not ſlothful in buſineſs. p. 206, 217, 220.

SERM. XXIII.

The Unſearchableneſs of God's Judgments.

ROM. XI. 33.

How unſearchable are his Judgments, and his ways paſt finding out? p. 225.

SERM. XXIV, XXV, XXVI, XXVII.

Of Obedience to our Spiritual Guides and Governours.

HEB. XIII. 17.

Obey them that have the rule over you. p. 236, 245, 254, 263.

SERM. XXVIII.

Of Self-love in General.

2 TIM. III, 1.

For men ſhall be lovers of themſelves. p. 272.

SERM

The CONTENTS.

SERM. XXIX.

Of Self-conceit.

2 TIM. III. 2.

For men ſhall be lovers of themſelves, &c. p. 279

SERM. XXX.

Of Self-confidence, Self-complacence, Self-will and Self-intereſt.

2 TIM. III. 2.

For men ſhall be lovers of themſelves, &c. p. 288.

SERM. XXXI.

Of Vain-glory, Arrogance, Talking and Thinking of ones ſelf.

2 TIM. III. 2.

For men ſhall be lovers of themſelves, &c. p. 296

SERM. XXXII, XXXIII.

Provide things honeſt in the ſight of all men.

ROM. XII. 17.

Provide things honeſt in the ſight of all men. p. 302, 314.

SERM. XXXIV, XXXV.

Provide things honeſt in the ſight of all men.

2 COR. VIII. 21.

Providing for honeſt things not onely in the ſight of the Lord, but in the ſight of Men. p. 325, 335.

SERM. XXXVI, XXXVII.

Of the Goodneſs of God.

PSAL. CXLV. 9.

The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works. p. 348, 356.

SERM. XXXVIII.

No reſpect of Perſons with God.

ROM. II. 11.

For, there is no reſpect of perſons with God. p. 365

SERM. XXXIX, XL, XLI, XLII.

The Doctrine of Univerſal Redemption aſſerted and explain'd.

1 TIM. IV. 10.

—The living God who is the Saviour of all men, eſpecially of thoſe that believe. p. 379, 393, 402, 412.

SERM.

The CONTENTS.

SERM. XLIII.

The Nativity of our Lord tidings of great joy.

LUKE II. 10.

And the Angel ſaid unto them, Fear not, for Behold, I bring you tidings of great joy, which ſhall be to all people. p. 422

SERM. XLIV.

The Sufferings of Chriſt *foretold in the Old Teſtament.*

ACTS III. 18.

But thoſe things, which God before had ſhewed by the mouth of all his Prophets, that Chriſt ſhould ſuffer, he hath ſo fulfilled p. 435

SERM. XLV.

A Whitſunday-*Sermon of the gift of the Holy Ghoſt.*

ACTS II. 38

——*And ye ſhall receive the gift of the Holy Ghoſt.* p. 447.

IMPRIMATUR,

Feb. 11. 168⅝. *C. Alſton*, R. P. D. *Hen.* Epiſc. *Lond.* a Sacris.

SERM.

TO

Her Royal Highneſs

THE

PRINCESS

ANNE

OF

DENMARK,

THOMAS BARROW,

The Authour's Father,

Humbly Dedicateth theſe

SERMONS.

TO

HER ROYAL HIGHNESS

THE

PRINCESS

AMELIA

OF

THIS ATLAS

IS

HUMBLY DEDICATED

BY

HER ROYAL HIGHNESS'S

MOST DUTIFUL AND OBEDIENT SERVANT

JOHN CARY.

Vol. III.

SERMON I.

Of Doing all in the Name of Christ

COLOSS. 3. 17.

And whatsoever ye do in word, or in deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus.

WHatsoever *ye do in word, or deed*: A Duty we see the Apostle injoyns us of a large extent, and therefore surely of a great Importance; indeed of an universal concernment; such as must go along with, must run through all our Words and all our Actions. We are therefore much obliged, and much concerned to attend thereto, and to practise it carefully. But first we must understand what it is; the doing whereof depends upon understanding the sense of that phrase *(doing in the name of Jesus)* being somewhat ambiguous, and capable of divers meanings; which both in common use, and in H. Scripture we find it to bear, different according to the variety of matters or occasions to which it is applyed; most of which are comprehended, and (as it were) complicated in that general one, according to which we may be said to do that in another person's name, which we do with any kind of reference or regard to him; such as our relations, or our obligations to that person do require; and the particular nature of the action doth admit. And according to this acception I conceive it safest and best to interpret Saint *Paul*'s meaning here, supposing it to comprehend all the more special, and restrained meanings of this phrase, truly applicable to the present matter; of which meanings I shall endeavour in order to propound the chief; and together, both to unfold and to inculcate the several respective branches of this duty. Yet first of all rejecting one or two, which cannot well be applied to this purpose.

To do in another's name, doth sometimes denote the assuming another's Person, or pretending to be the same with him, the very He. So, *many shall come in my name*, (Prophesied our Saviour) *saying, I am Christ*: To do thus in *Jesus* his Name, is the part of an Antichrist, and an Impostor. That sence therefore hath nothing to do here. Matt. 24. 5.

Again; to do in anothers Name, doth often imply doing *alterius loco*, or *vice*; in another's Name, or stead, as a deputy, or substitute; representing the Person, or supplying the office of another. So did the Prophets

Jer. 7. 13. 26. 5. 14. 14. Jam. 5. 10. Jo. 5. 34. Matt. 10. 4. Ezr. 5. 1. 2 Cor. 5. 20. Rom. 13. 4. Deut. 1. 17.

come, and speak in God's Name; what they declared, or injoined, being therefore said to be declared, and injoined by God himself: *I spake unto you, rising up early, and speaking* (*viz.* by the Prophets, whom he sent, and who are said to come and speak in his Name.) And thus the Apostles spake in *Christ*'s Name: *We are Ambassadours for Christ*; *we pray you in Christ's stead, be reconciled.* Thus also Princes govern, and Magistrates execute Justice in God's Name; whence they are stiled *Gods*, as being his Lieutenants, administring that Judgment, which belongs originally and principally to him. Now for this sense, neither is it so proper, or convenient here; it agreeing only to some particular Persons, and to some peculiar Actions of them; insomuch, that others presuming to act, according to that manner or kind, in *Jesus* his Name, shall thereby become usurpers and deceivers. We (and to us all this Precept is directed) shall heinously transgress our duty, doing any thing thus in his Name, without his Letters of Credence; without being specially called or sent; or being duly by him authorized thereto.

These, and such like senses the present matter doth not well admit; the rest that suit thereto I shall with some distinction in order represent.

I. To do in another's Name sometimes doth signify to do it out of affection or honour to another; for anothers sake, because we love, or esteem him; ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι being equivalent to ἕνεκα τοῦ ὀνόματος, and διὰ τὸ ὄνομα. Thus it is said, *Whosoever shall give you a cup of Water to drink in my name*; *because ye are Christ's* (is added by way of interpretation, that is, out of respect to *Christ*, because of your relation to him) *shall not lose his reward.* And thus surely we ought to do every thing in *Jesus* his Name; all our Actions ought to proceed from a Principle of grateful love, and reverence towards our gracious Redeemer. *Let all your Actions be done in Charity*, saith the *Apostle*; if in Charity to our Neighbour, then much more in love to him, for whose sake we are especially bound to love our Neighbour. Upon any undertaking, or applying our selves to action, we should so reflect thereupon as to consider, whether that we are going about be apt to please him, and conducible to his honour; if so, remembring what he hath done and suffered for us, (what excellent Blessings he hath purchased for us, what exceeding Benefits he hath conferr'd upon us) we should out of love and respect to him readily perform it; but if it otherwise appear displeasing, or dishonourable to him, we should, from the same Principles, carefully decline it. The duty is certain, and the reason thereof evident; for inducement to the practice thereof observe St. *Paul*'s example; who thus represents himself in the main imployment of his life, acting, *The love of Christ constrains us*; *judging this, that he died for all, that they who live might not live to themselves, but to him that died and rose for them*: The love of *Christ*, begot and maintained by a consideration of his great benefits conferr'd on him, was the spring that set St. *Paul* on work, that excited, and urged him forward to action. Thus doing, we shall do in *Jesus* his Name; but if we act out of love to our selves (to promote our own interests, to gratify our own desires, to procure Credit or Praise to our selves) we act onely in our own Names, and for our own sakes; not in the Name, or for the sake of *Jesus*.

Comp. Marc. 9. 41. Matt. 10. 41. 24. 9. 19. 29. Matt. 18. 5.

1 Cor. 16. 14.

Φιλοτιμούμεθα εὐπρόσδεκτοι αὐτῷ εἶναι. 1 Cor. 5. 9. 14.

1 Thes. 2. 6. Tit. 1. 11. 1 Pet. 5. 2. Philip. 1. 15. Matt. 23. 5.

II. To do in another's Name implies doing (chiefly) for the interest, or advantage of another; upon another's behalf or accompt; as the servants, or factours of another. For, when the business is another's, and the

the fruit, or benefit emergent belong to another, he that profecutes that buſineſs may well be, and is commonly ſuppoſed to act in that other's name. Thus our Saviour is in St. *John*'s Goſpel expreſſed *to come, to ſpeak, to act in God's* Name; becauſe he did God's buſineſs (*the work which God gave him to accompliſh*) and entirely *ſought the glory of God*, as he there himſelf often avouches and profeſſes. And thus (in imitation of him) ought we alſo to do all things in his Name; remembring that we *are not our own Men, but the Servants of Jeſus*, (Servants to him not only by nature, as to our Maker and Preſerver; but by purchaſe, as to our Redeemer, who bought us with the greateſt Price; and by compact alſo, we having freely undertaken his Service, and expecting wages from him) that we have therefore no buſineſs or imployment properly our own, but that all our buſineſs is (or ſhould be) to ſerve him, and promote his glory; *Whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we ſhould do all to the glory of our Lord.* Whatever I ſay, we do, we therefore ſhould perform it with this formal reference, as it were, toward *Jeſus*, as his Servants, from conſcience of the duty we owe to him; with intention therein to ſerve him; in expectation of reward onely from him. So doth St. *Paul* (in proſecution of this ſame Precept) beneath in this *Chapter* injoyns us, that *whatever we do, we perform it heartily, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing* (or conſidering) *that from the Lord we ſhall receive the recompence of the inheritance; for that we ſerve the Lord Chriſt.* In like manner otherwhere he teaches us to do what we do *not as pleaſers of men* (not upon any inferiour accompts) *but as Servants of Chriſt, knowing and conſidering that we have a Maſter in Heaven.* But;

Joh. 7. 18. 8. 54. 10. 25. 5. 43. 36. 6. 28. 9. 3, 4.
1 Cor. 6. 19. 7. 23. Heb. 9. 12. 1 Pet. 1. 18. Rom. 14. 8, 9.
1 Cor. 10. 31.
Coloſs. 3. 22, 23.
Eph. 6. 6, 9.

III. Doing in another's Name imports frequently doing by the appointment and command, or by the commiſſion and authority of another. Ἐν ποίᾳ δυνάμει ἢ ἐν ποίῳ ὀνόματι, *By what power, and in what name have ye done theſe things*, ſay the High Prieſts to the Apoſtles? that is, Who did appoint or authorize you to do thus? their anſwer was ready; *In the Name of Jeſus*, who had ſent, commiſſionated, and commanded them to Preach, and propagate that Doctrine. And thus we are alſo bound to do all things in the Name of *Jeſus*, regulating all our actions by his Law; conforming our whole Lives to his Will; acting, not only out of good Principles (Principles of Love and Conſcience) but according to right Rules; the Rules of his Word and Example, which he hath declared, and preſcribed to us: for what is done beſide his Warrant and Will, cannot be rightly eſteemed done in his Name; will not as ſo be avowed, or accepted by him; no unjuſt or impious action will he upon any terms countenance or patronize. It was once a famous ſaying, *All Miſchief begins in nomine Domini*; and much ſurely, more than one way, hath been done under the like Notion or Pretence; but this will not ſerve to excuſe the doing of that, in the day of final reckoning for our actions. For, *there will be many* (we are taught) *that ſhall in that day by ſpecious profeſſions of having done this or that in Chriſt's Name*, veil their tranſgreſſions, and their neglects of duty, *ſaying, Lord, Lord, have we not in thy Name propheſied; and in thy Name caſt out devils, and in thy Name done many wonderful things?* who yet, our Lord himſelf aſſures us, ſhall have this reply made to them, *I never knew you, depart from me ye workers of iniquity.* There will be thoſe that ſhall claim acquaintance with *Chriſt* in ſuch terms: *Lord, we have eaten and drank before thee; and thou haſt taught in our Streets*; whom yet our Lord will diſclaim with a *Depart ye from me, all ye workers of iniquity*:

Act. 4. 7.
Joh. 5. 36, 37, 43. 14. 54. 17. 18. Luc. 24. 47. 2 Cor. 5. 20. 1 Cor. 6. 11. 2 Theſſ. 3. 6.
Joh. 16. 2.
Matt. 7. 23.
Luc. 13. 26.

'Tis not, we see, Propheſying in *Chriſt*'s Name (or Preaching about him) nor frequent attendance upon thoſe who do ſo; nor ſpeaking much or hearing much concerning him; 'tis not having great gifts or endowments conferr'd by *Chriſt* (not even ſo great as that of working Miracles) 'tis not familiar converſe with *Chriſt*; or making frequent addreſſes to him, that can ſanctify all a Man's actions, or ſo entitle them to the Name of *Chriſt*, as to ſecure his Perſon from being diſavowed and rejected by *Chriſt*; 'tis onely the conforming all our Actions to his holy Laws, that can aſſure us to be acknowledged and accepted by him. This I could wiſh they would conſider, who ſeem, by ſuch pretences, to commend, or excuſe their actions, although otherwiſe irregular and plainly contrary to the laws of *Chriſt*; ſuch as thoſe of being meek and charitable toward all Men; living peaceably our ſelves, and endeavouring to promote Peace among others; abſtaining from raſh and hard cenſures; from reviling and defaming others; paying reverence and obedience to Superiours; and the like Laws of Chriſt, not only expreſs and manifeſt, but even of the higheſt rank and conſequence among them; being mainly conducing to that which our Lord eſpecially tenders, the publick welfare and benefit of Mankind; the violation whereof cannot be juſtified by pretending any ſpecial regard whatever to *Chriſt*, or any collateral performance done, whether truly or ſeemingly, in his Name. We do but deceive our ſelves, if we conceit, that becauſe we think much, or ſpeak much of *Jeſus*; or have a zeal for ſomething good, all our actions are done in his Name; No; it only can be juſtly impreſſed upon, can warrant and ſanctify actions truly good and agreeable to his Law; it were an abuſe and forgery to do it, like ſtamping the Kings Name (or Image) on counterfeit metal; upon braſs or tin, inſtead of gold or ſilver. Good Intention and good Principles are indeed (as it were) the form and Soul of good Actions; but their being juſt and lawful are the body and matter of them; neceſſarily alſo concurring to their eſſence and integrity; they cannot ſubſiſt without it, but muſt paſs (as it were) for ghoſts and ſhadows. We are therefore concerned in all our doings to have an eſpecial regard to *Chriſt*'s Law as their rule; that will render them capable of *Chriſt*'s Name, and denominate them Chriſtian.

IV. Hereto we may add, that what we do in imitation of *Jeſus*, and in conformity to his Practice (that living rule and copy propoſed to us) we may be ſaid peculiarly to do in his Name. As a Picture uſeth to bear his Name, whom it was made to repreſent, and whom it reſembles; ſo if we ſet *Chriſt*'s Example before us, and endeavour to tranſcribe it; if our life in the principal lineaments of ſanctity and goodneſs do reſemble his holy life; they may well bear his Name. But if our practiſe be unlike and unſuitable to his, we cannot affix his Name thereto without great preſumption and abuſe; ſuch as would be committed, if to a draught of foul hue, and ugly features, we ſhould attribute the Name of ſome moſt handſome and goodly Perſon, of high worth and quality. To do thus in *Jeſus* his Name (with ſuch a regard to him) is a duty often preſcribed unto us, not only as relating to ſome caſes and actions, (as when his Charity, his Patience, his Humility, his Meekneſs are ſignally commended to our imitation) but generally, *He, that ſaith he abideth in him, ought as he walked, ſo himſelf alſo to walk*; that is, whoever profeſſes himſelf a Chriſtian ought to conform the whole tenour of his Converſation to that of *Jeſus*; to endeavour in every imitable Perfection to reſemble him. So that whenever

Eph. 5. 1, 2.
1 Cor. 10. 1.
Joh. 15. 12. 13. 34.
Heb. 12. 2.
Joh. 13. 15.
Phil. 2. 5.
1 Pet. 2. 21.
1 Joh. 2. 6.

ever we undertake any action, we ſhould do well to look upon this Pattern, thus (as it were) examining and inquiring of our ſelves; What did my Maſter in this or the like caſe; do I do the ſame thing, do I act from the ſame Principles, do I proceed in the ſame manner as he did; am I herein his Diſciple and Follower? if ſo, in his Name let me go on chearfully, if not let me forbear. Doing this will not be only according to our duty, but an eſpecial help and furtherance of good practice.

V. To do in another's Name doth ſometimes import doing by any power derived, or virtue imparted by another; for that a thing ſo done may be imputed, ſhould be aſcribed to that other. So, *Through thee* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*) *will we puſh down our Enemies, in thy Name will we throw down thoſe that hate us*, (through thee, and in thy Name ſignify the ſame thing.) So did the *Apoſtles* caſt out Devils, and perform their other Miracles in *Jeſus* his Name (διὰ τῦ ὀνόματος, *by his Name*, 'tis ſometime expreſſed) that is by a divine virtue imparted from him. To this I add another acception, ſcarce different (at leaſt as to our purpoſe) from that, according to which doing in another's Name ſignifies doing it in truſt, or confidence repoſed upon another, with expectation of aid, or hope of good ſucceſs from another. So, *we reſt on thee*, (ſaid good King *Aſa*) *and in thy name we go againſt this multitude*; in thy Name, that is, hoping for aſſiſtance and ſucceſs from thee. And thus it is ſaid, that *David went out* againſt *Goliah in the name of the Lord of hoſts*; that is, confiding in God's help as his onely weapon and defence: Thus alſo did the H. *Apoſtles* work their Miracles in *Jeſus* his Name; διὰ τῆ πίςεως τῦ ὀνόματος αὐτῦ, *by faith in his Name*, (ſaith St. *Peter*) *his name hath made this Man ſtrong*; that is, we did only truſt in his divine Power, and it was that Power of his which reſtored that weak Perſon to his ſtrength. And thus alſo it is our duty to do all things in our Saviours Name; with faith and hope in him; wholly relying upon him for direction and aſſiſtence; expecting from him onely a bleſſing and happy iſſue of our undertakings. What we do in confidence of our own wiſdom or ability; or in affiance upon the help of any other Perſon or thing, we do in our own Name, or in the Name of that thing (or that Perſon) in whom we ſo confide; to our ſelves, or to ſuch auxiliaries we ſhall be ready to attribute the ſucceſs, and to render the glory of the Performance; *glorying in our own arm*, and *ſacrificing to our Net*. But what we undertake onely depending upon our Lord for ability, and ſucceſs may therefore bear his Name, becauſe our faith derives the Power from him, which enables us happily to perform it; ſo that the performance may truly be attributed to him, and to him we ſhall be apt to aſcribe it. And thus, I ſay, we are certainly obliged to do every thing in his Name; (in his Name alone;) retaining a conſtant ſenſe both of our own infirmity, and of the impotency of all other created things; and conſequently a total diffidence both in our ſelves, and in them; but repoſing all our truſt in the direction, and aſſiſtence of our All-wiſe, and All-mighty Lord; of *Jeſus*, to *whom all power in heaven and earth is given*, (who indeed had it originally by Nature as God; but alſo farther hath acquired it by deſert and purchaſe) into whoſe hands all things are given; and all things are put under his feet; who hath obtained this Power in deſign to uſe it for our good; and is thereby always ready to help us in our need, if we have recourſe unto him, and rely upon him; making him what St. *Paul* ſtiles him, *Our hope*; our onely hope; renouncing all other confidences not ſubordinate to him. To do ſo is a duty evidently grounded

'Εν τῷ ὀ. ρώματι. Pſal. 44. 4. 89. 24. Matt. 7. 22. Marc. 9. 38. Act. 3. 6. 4. 10, 30. Joh. 17. 11. 2 Chron. 14. 11. 1 Sam. 17. 45. Act. 3. 16. Hab. 1. 16. Mat. 28. 18. Joh. 3. 35. 13. 3. 17. 2. Heb. 1. 2. 2. 8. Eph. 1. 22. 1 Cor. 15. 27. Phil. 2. 9. Apoc. 5. 12. 1 Tim. 1. 1.

ed as well upon the reaſon of the thing, as upon the will and command of God; to do otherwiſe is no leſs a palpable folly, than a manifeſt injury to God. For, in truth, neither have we, nor any other created thing any power, other than ſuch as he is pleaſed freely to diſpenſe; and which is not continually both for its being and its efficacy ſubject to him, ſo that he may at his pleaſure ſubtract it, or obſtruct its effect: *No King is ſaved by the multitude of an hoſt; a mighty man is not delivered by much ſtrength; a horſe is a vain thing for ſafety*: Whence 'tis plain, that we cannot, upon any created power, ground a ſolid aſſurance of ſucceſs in any undertaking; it will be *leaning upon a broken reed* (which cannot ſupport us, and will pierce our hands) both a vain and a miſchievous confidence; that will abuſe us, bringing both diſappointment and guilt upon us; the guilt of wronging our Lord many wayes; by arrogating to our ſelves, or aſſigning to others what he only doth truly deſerve, and what peculiarly of right belongs to him; withdrawing the ſame from him; implying him unable or unwilling to aſſiſt us, and do us good; neglecting to uſe that ſtrength which he ſo dearly purchaſed and ſo graciouſly tenders; ſo diſappointing him, and defeating (as it were) his purpoſes of favour and mercy toward us. On the other ſide, truſting onely upon our Saviour, we act wiſely and juſtly; gratefully and officiouſly; for that in doing ſo, we build our hopes upon moſt ſure grounds; upon a wiſdom that cannot be deceived; upon a ſtrength that cannot be withſtood; upon a goodneſs that hath no limits; upon a fidelity that can never fail. For that we act with an humility, and ſobriety of mind ſutable to our condition, and to the reaſon of things; for that we thereby declare our good opinion of him as onely able, and very willing to do us good; for that we render him his juſt honour and due; we comply with his earneſt deſires; we promote his gracious deſigns of mercy and kindneſs toward us. Hence it is that every where in H. Scripture God ſo highly commends, ſo greatly encourages this duty of truſting alone in him; that he ſo ill reſents, and ſo ſtrongly deters from the breach or omiſſion thereof; *Thus ſaith the Lord, Curſed be the man that truſteth in man, and maketh fleſh his arm, and whoſe heart departeth from the Lord; for he ſhall be like the heath in the deſart; and ſhall not ſee when good cometh, but ſhall inhabit the parched places in the wilderneſs; in a ſalt land and not inhabited. Bleſſed is the man that truſteth in the Lord, and whoſe hope the Lord is; for he ſhall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that ſpreadeth out her roots by the river; and ſhall not ſee when heat cometh; but her leaf ſhall be green; and ſhall not be careful in the year of drought, neither ſhall ceaſe from yeilding fruit*: thus in that place, thus in innumerable others we are threatened not onely with diſappointment, and bad ſucceſs in our undertakings, but with ſevere puniſhment, if we betake our ſelves to other ſuccours, and neglect or diſtruſt, or (in ſo doing) deſert God; but are encouraged, not only with aſſurance of proſperous ſucceſs, but of additional rewards, if intirely in our proceedings we depend upon and adhere to God. Thus we ſhould do in all (even our moſt common and ordinary) affairs, which no leſs than the reſt are ſubject to his power, and governed by his care. For you know how St. *James* doth reprehend it as a piece of naughty boaſting and arrogance, to ſay, *The*

Eccl. 9. 11. *The race is not to the ſwift, nor the battle to the ſtrong.*

By ſtrength ſhall no man prevail.
1 Sam. 2. 9.
Pſal. 33. 17. 146. 3. 44. 3.

Iſa. 36. 6.

Iſa. 43. 11. ——— *Beſide me there is no Saviour.*
Hoſ. 13. 4, 10. Pſal. 106. 21.
Jer. 14. 8.

Pſal. 146. 5. 40. 4. 44. 6. 33. 18. 147. 11. 34. 22. 125. 1. 34. 22. 31. 19. 61. 4. 91. 4. 118. 8. 78. 22. 66. 2. 112. 7.

Iſa. 51. 5. 57. 13. 50. 7. 26. 3.
Jer. 14. 8.
Jer. 17. 5, 6, &c.

Matt. 10. 29, 30.

morrow

morrow we will go to this City, and ſtay there a year, and trade and gain; inſtead of ſaying, *if the Lord will we will live, and do this or that*; that is, to reſolve upon, undertake, or proſecute any affair without ſubmiſſion to God's will, and dependence on his Providence: But eſpecially we ought, in matters and actions more ſpiritual, to practiſe this duty; for that to the performing of theſe, we have of our ſelves a peculiar impotence and unfitneſs; needing therefore a more ſpecial aſſiſtance from our Lord; that the ſucceſs of them more particularly depends upon him; that the glory of them in an eſpecial manner is appropriate, and (as it were) conſecrate to him. if it be a folly and a crime, to think we can do any thing without God, 'tis much more ſo to think we can do any thing good without him; 'tis an arrogance, 'tis an idolatry, 'tis a ſacrilege much more vain and wicked to do ſo. To imagine that we can, by the force of our own reaſon and reſolution, atchieve any of thoſe moſt high and hard enterprizes, to which, by the rules of vertue and piety we are engaged; that we can, by our own conduct and proweſs, encounter and withſtand, defeat and vanquiſh thoſe ſo crafty, ſo mighty enemies of our ſalvation (our own fleſhly deſires; the menaces and allurements of the world; the ſlights and powers of darkneſs) is much a worſe preſumption, than in other affairs of greateſt difficulty to expect ſucceſs without the divine aſſiſtance and bleſſing; than in other moſt dangerous battels, to think we can, *by our own bow, and by our own ſpear ſave our ſelves*; that we can obtain victory otherwiſe, than from his hand and diſpoſal, who is the Lord of Hoſts. Reaſon tells us, and experience alſo ſhews, and our Saviour hath expreſly ſaid it, That (in theſe things) *without him* (without his eſpecial influence and bleſſing) *we can do nothing*; he tells us, that we are but branches, inſerted into him; ſo that, without continually drawing ſap from him, we can have no life or vigour ſpiritual. The wiſeſt and beſt of Men, have, by their practice, taught us to acknowledge ſo much; to depend wholly upon him, to aſcribe all to him in this kind. *Why* (ſay St. *Peter* and St. *John*) *do ye wonder at this*; *or why gaze ye upon us, as if by our own power or piety, we had made this man walk*? ——*His name* (the name of *Jeſus*) *through Faith in his name, hath made this man ſtrong*: that acknowledgment indeed concerns a miraculous work; but ſpiritual works are in reality no leſs, they requiring as much or more of virtue ſupernatural, or the preſent interpoſition of God's hand to effect them; they make leſs ſhew without, but need as great efficacy within; ſo our Saviour, it ſeems, did imply, when he ſaid, *He that believes in me, the works that I do he ſhall do, and greater works than theſe*. Every good and faithful Man doth not work Miracles, yet ſomewhat greater, it ſeems, by the grace of *Chriſt*, *he performs*: However, to theſe St. *Paul* referr'd, when he affirmed, *I can do all things in* Chriſt *that ſtrengtheneth me*; nothing was ſo hard that he feared to attempt, that he deſpaired to maſter and go through with by the help of *Chriſt*; and, *Not* (ſaith he again) *that we are ſufficient of our ſelves to think any thing of our ſelves*; *but our ſufficiency is of God*: He was as ſenſible of his own inability, as he was confident in the gracious help of *Chriſt*. Thus ſhould we do all things in the Name of *Jeſus*; and 'tis not onely a duty to do it, but it may be a great encouragement to us, that we are capable of doing it; a great comfort to conſider, that in all honeſt undertakings, we have ſo ready, and ſo ſure an aid to ſecond and further us in them; confiding n which, nothing is ſo difficult, but we may eaſily accompliſh (*a grain of faith*

Jam. 4. 13.

Ὄυτε γὰρ ἀνθρώπινον τι ἀνὰ πᾶν ἔτι τὰ θεῖα συναναφορᾶς δ' πρόξενα. Ant. 3. 13.

Pſal. 44. 6.

Joh. 15. 5.

Act. 3. 12, 16.

Joh. 14. 12.

Philip. 4. 13.

2 Cor. 3. 5.

Οὐδὲν ἀδυνατήσει ὑμῖν. Mat. 17. 20. 21. 21. Luc. 17. 6: Matt. 14. 29. Luc. 10. 19.

faith will be able *to remove mountains*;) nothing is so hazardous, but we may safely venture on *(walking on the Sea, treading upon Serpents and scorpions*; daring *all the power of the enemy.)* In his Name we may, if our duty or good reason calls us forth (how small and weak soever, how destitute soever of defensive arms, or weapons offensive) naked and unarmed, with a sling and a stone, go out against the biggest, and best armed *Philistine*, nothing doubting of victory: Our weakness it self (if we be humbly conscious and sensible thereof) will be an advantage to us (as it was to St. *Paul*;) to all effects and purposes *the grace of our Lord will be sufficient for us*, if we apply it, and trust therein. But farther,

2 Cor. 9. 21.

VI. To do in another's Name may denote, to do it with such regard to another, that we acknowledge (that, I say, we heartily and thankfully acknowledge) our hope of prospering in what we do; our expectation of acceptance, favour, or reward to be grounded on him; that they are procured by his merits and means; are bestowed only for his sake. Thus our Saviour bids us to *offer our prayers in his name*; that is, representing unto God his meritorious performances in our behalf, as the ground of our access to God, of our hope to obtain from him what we request. So also we are injoined to *give thanks in his name*; that is, with perswasion and acknowledgment, that only in respect to him we become capable to receive, or enjoy any good thing; that in effect, all the blessings by divine mercy vouchsafed us have been procured by him for us, are through him conveyed unto us. And thus also we should do all things in the name of *Jesus*, offering all our deeds to God, as sacrifices and services unworthy of acceptance, both in themselves, and as proceeding from us; but pleasing, and acceptable to God onely for his sake. We should do well, upon all occasions, to remember our natural condition, and the general state of mankind; such as it was before he did undertake, such as it would have continued still, had he not undertaken for it; That our race had forfeited, and was fallen from God's favour; having injured him beyond all power of making him any reparation or satisfaction; that thence it was secluded from all means and hopes apparent of happiness, was exposed and tended downright unto misery; that we consequently had no ground to hope, that God (from whom no less in mind and in deed, than by reason of our guilt and state of condemnation we were estranged) would, in kindness, bestow any good upon us, or from us accept favourably any thing we should do. But that, by our Saviour's performances, the case is altered; He, by his entire obedience, having so pleased God, by his patient submission to God's will, having so appeased his anger, and satisfi'd his justice, that God is not only reconciled, but hath an especial favour, bears an earnest good-will toward us. That now the good things we possess, we may truly esteem as blessings, and enjoy them with real comfort, as proceeding from mercy and kindness; now what we honestly endeavour, we may hope shall please God; now we have a free access to God, and may chearfully present our sacrifices of duty and devotion, with a full perswasion that they shall be accepted. But all this happiness, all these favours and priviledges, we must alwaies remember to come from the continued procurement and mediation of the *Beloved*; so as ever to be ready to acknowledge it, and to return our thanks therefore. To this sense that our *Apostle* here had an especial regard, the words immediately following imply —— *Doing all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God, and the Father by him*; that is, in all things we do, taking occasion to ren-

Joh. 14. 13. 15. 16. 16. 23, 24.

Eph. 5. 20. 3. 21.

Rom. 3. 23. 11. 32. Gal. 3. 22.

Act. 3. 46.

Eph. 2. 17. 3. 12. Ἐν παῤῥησίᾳ. Eph. 1. 6.

der

der thanks to God, as for his ſake being merciful and bountiful to us; beſtowing upon us the good we enjoy, bleſſing our endeavours, accepting our performances. We muſt not conceit, that any regard, any mercy, any favour, any reward is due to us in equity, is in effect conferr'd upon us upon our perſonal ſcore (for, how mean things are we in compariſon of his greatneſs, how vile and filthy things muſt we appear to his moſt pure, and all-diſcerning eyes; how unworthy of his regard and of his affection muſt we needs take our ſelves to be, if we do but well conſider, and are acquainted with our ſelves?) But that *in him* (*i. e.* for his ſake, and by his means) *God hath bleſſed us with all ſpiritual bleſſings*, in him ἐχαρίτωσεν ἡμᾶς, *God hath favoured*, and caſt his Grace upon *us*; valuing us notwithſtanding all our imperfections; loving us notwithſtanding the ſpots with which we are defiled; notwithſtanding all the offences we have committed; for the relation and alliance we have to *Jeſus*. Nor muſt we look on our ſervices (the beſt we are able to perform) as in themſelves grateful or ſatisfactory: For all of them, if we mark them well, we ſhall find not only quite *unprofitable to God*, but very defective in many reſpects; for, Who can ſay, he performs any thing both in kind, in manner, in degree throughly right and good; with that ardency of love he owes to God, with that purity of intention, with that earneſt vigour of ſpirit, with that undiſtractedneſs of mind, with which he ſhould perform it? No; in all our flock we cannot pick out a ſacrifice entire and unblemiſhed; ſuch as God requires, ſuch as duty exacts of us. They need therefore (all our ſervices need) to be commended and compleated by the beloved Son his perfectly well-pleaſing performances; they need to be cleanſed and hallowed, by paſſing through the hands of our moſt Holy and undefiled high-Prieſt: to become ſweet and ſavoury (or to receive that ὀσμὴν εὐωδίας, which St. *Paul* ſpeaks of) from being offered up *in his cenſer*. In fine all our actions ſhould, in our intention, be works of religion dedicated to God's ſervice and honour; ſacrifices, as it were, of gratitude and homage to God; ſo they ought all to be offered up in the Name of *Jeſus*. I add farther,

Eph. 1. 3. 6.

Heb. 7. 26.

Eph. 5. 2. Rev. 8. 3. 5.

VII. Laſtly, that we do in the name of *Jeſus*, may well imply doing with invocation of him: thus we may underſtand that place of St. *James*, where the Elders are adviſed *to pray, and anoint the ſick in the Lord's name*; for, to anoint them, imploring our Lord's bleſſing upon them, and upon thoſe means uſed for their cure. And thus St. *Chryſoſtome* expounds the words; do all in *Jeſus* his name, *that is*, ſaith he, *imploring him for your helper in all things*; *alwaies firſt praying to him, undertake your buſineſs*. Doing thus, will indeed Chriſten, and conſecrate our actions; for *all things* (ſaith our *Apoſtle*) *are ſanctified by the word of God, and prayer*; that is, by God's bleſſing implored, and obtained by prayer; or, if God's word be there taken for his law, or revealed will, it is there ſignified, that our actions are not only ſanctified by their lawfulneſs, or conformity to that good rule, Gods declared will; but alſo by the invocation of his name; however) all our actions, it ſeems, are unhallowed and profane, if not accompanied with devotion. That to do thus is our duty, appears by thoſe frequent injunctions, to *pray indeſinently*, to *pray alwaies*, to *abide inſtantly in prayer*; which do not onely import, that we ſhould pray often,

Jam. 5. 14.

In locum.
Αὐτὸν καλῶν βοηθὸν, ἐπὶ πάντων πρότερον αὐτῷ εὐχόμενος ἄρχου τῶν πραγμάτων.

1 Tim. 4. 5.

Διὰ πίστεως ἡ πρᾶξις πνευματικὴ τῷ προσευχῇ. M. Eremi.

Μηδὲν μήτε ποιῶμεν μήτε λέγωμεν ἄνευ ἢ ἀπὸ θεὸν καλέσαι καὶ παρακαλέσαι συνεφάπτεσθαι ἡμῖν εἰς χρηστὸν ἡμῶν ἀπαντῶν. Chryſ.

Τοῦτο δὴ πάντες ὅσοι καὶ κατ' ἀρχὰς σωφροσύνης μετέσχον δεῖ πίστεως καὶ σμικρᾶς καὶ μεγάλης πράγματος ἀπὸ θεὸν ἀεί τι καλεῖσθαι. Plato. Tim.
Vid. Epiſt. 8. Arr. Epict. 11. 18.
1 Theſ. 5. 17. Luc. 18. 1.
Rom. 12. 12. Coloſ. 4. 2.

Ἐκτενῶς. and continue with Patience, and earneſtneſs in prayer; but that we ſhould annex it to, or interpoſe it among all our actions, undertaking nothing (at leaſt of conſideration or moment) without it. We ſhould do it (our *Saviour* commands) ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ, that is, *on every occaſion*; and Saint *Paul* gives the ſame direction, *Praying*, ſaies he, ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ, *on all opportunities, with all prayer and ſupplication in ſpirit*; (in ſpirit, that is, I take it, * *in our hearts* at leaſt, and with ſecret elevations of our mind, if not with our mouth and voice.) And (more explicitely otherwhere ſaith he) *Be careful for nothing, but in every thing* (in all your affairs) *by prayer and ſupplication, with thanksgiving, let your requeſts be made known to God.* And thus to do (to accompany all our undertakings with Prayer) we are indeed concern'd upon many accompts. We need God's direction (being our ſelves very blind and ignorant) in the choice of what we attempt; that our ends and deſigns may be good; conducible to God's honour and our own true advantage. For, as the Prophet tells us, *The way of man is not in himſelf, neither is it in man that walketh to direct his ſteps*; And, as the Wiſeman adds, *Man's goings are of the Lord, how then can a man underſtand his own way?*) implying, ſince God onely knows what is beſt for us, that we of our ſelves without his direction, know not what to do, whether to go:) The H. *Pſalmiſt* ſignifies the ſame in thoſe words (very encouraging to the practice of this duty) *What man is he that feareth the Lord?* (that feareth him, that is, who worſhippeth him, and ſeeketh his guidance) *him ſhall he teach in the way that he ſhall chuſe.* We need alſo (being our ſelves not onely weak and infirm, but inconſtant and unſtable) Gods aſſiſtence, and upholding hand in the purſuance of our well-choſen deſigns (that we may uſe the beſt means, and proceed in a ſtreight courſe; that we may perſiſt upright and ſteady in our Proceedings) that which the *Wiſeman* ſeems to call, the eſtabliſhing of our thoughts, and promiſes, as a conſequence, upon our ſeeking God's aſſiſtence in our actions, and relying thereon; *Commit*, ſaith he, *thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts ſhall be eſtabliſhed*; (thou ſhalt drive on thy good purpoſes ſteadily, without ſtumbling or falling; at leaſt irrecoverably.) So the *Pſalmiſt* aſſures us concerning a good man: *The ſteps of a good man are ordered by the Lord*; *none of his ſteps ſhall ſlide*; *though he fall he ſhall not utterly be caſt down*; *for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.* We alſo farther, as to the final ſucceſs of our affairs, ſtand in need of Gods bleſſing; that he, upon whoſe will altogether depends the diſpoſal of all events, ſhould beſtow a good iſſue unto our endeavours, that they prove not matter of diſcouragement, or diſcomfort to us; that which alſo the *Pſalmiſt* aſſures us of obtaining, upon condition of our imploring and depending upon God for it; *Commit thy way* (ſaith he) *unto the Lord*; *truſt alſo in him, and he ſhall bring it to paſs.* We do thus need in all our affairs, the direction, aſſiſtence and bleſſing of our Lord; but ſhall not have them without prayer, for, the rule is, *Ask and have, ſeek and find*; without asking we are not likely to obtain thoſe gifts; without ſeeking we muſt not hope to find thoſe benefits from God. If we are ſo proud, as to think we do not need them, or ſo negligent, as not to mind them; or ſo diſtruſtful of the divine power or goodneſs, that we imagine he cannot or will not afford

Luc. 11. 36. Eph. 6. 18. * Eph. 5. 19. Ἐν καρδίᾳ. Phil. 4. 6, 7.

Ἐν παντὶ. *Bene ac ſapienter majores inſtituerant, ut rerum agendarum, ita dicendi initium a precationibus caperetur; quod nihil rite, nihilque providenter homines ſine Deorum immortalium ope, conſilio, bonore auſpicarentur.* Plin. *in Paneg.*

Job 18. 7. Iſ. 30. 1. Hoſ. 10. 6. Prov. 1. 25. 30. Pſal. 106. 13. 16. 7. 73. 24. 107. 11.

Jer. 10. 23.

Prov. 20. 24. 16. 9.

Pſal. 25. 12, 9.

Prov. 16. 9.

Pſal. 37. 23, 24. 17. 31.

Pſal. 37. 5. 119. 5, 133.

Luc. 11. 9, 10. Joh. 14. 13. Pſal. 9. 10.

afford them to us; we are like to be ſo unhappy as to want them. God expects from us, that we ſhould, in whatever we do, acknowledge him; ('tis the *Wiſeman*'s expreſſion, *In all thy waies acknowledge him, and he ſhall direct thy paths*;) acknowledge him as the only faithful guide and counſellour; as the only ſufficient helper and protectour; as the only free arbitratour and donour of good ſucceſs. Nothing therefore is well done, which is not thus done; we cannot be ſatisfied in what we do, we cannot hope for a comfortable end thereof; we cannot expect a bleſſing from God, if we have refuſed, or if we have neglected the recommending our proceedings to his care. We can, I ſay, do nothing; not eat, not ſleep, not trade, not travel, not ſtudy with any true content, any reaſonable ſecurity, any ſatisfactory hope, if we have not firſt humbly implored God's favour; committing our ſelves, and our buſineſs into his hand, that hand, which diſpenſeth all good, which alone can keep off all danger and miſchief from us. *God ſhall ſend his Angel before thee*: ſo did our Father *Abraham* ſend his ſervant about his buſineſs; having queſtionleſs before commended it to God by Prayer. *God Almighty give you mercy before the man*: ſo did *Jacob* give his ſons their diſpatches toward *Ægypt*: In ſuch a manner did we enter upon all our affairs, we could not but be full of hope, and void of care concerning them; for that commonly we are ſo full of anxiety about the event of what we undertake, whence doth it ariſe, but from a neglect of this duty? for, having committed our buſineſs into ſo ſure a hand, how could we farther be ſolicitous about it? Had we, according to St. *Peter*'s advice, *Caſt our care upon the Lord*; or, *caſt our burden upon him* (as the *Pſalmiſt* exhorts us) had we duly ſought and invoked him, who *never faileth them that ſeek him*, who *is nigh to all them that call upon him*; we ſhould not have ſuch a load of troubleſome care reſting upon us; our hearts would be light, and free as to all theſe things; we ſhould be ſecure, that nothing very bad, or diſaſtrous, could befal us; we ſhould experience it true, what the Prophet affirms in that Prayer or *Pſalm* to God; *Thou ſhalt keep him in perfect peace, whoſe mind is ſtayed on thee: Be careful for nothing*, Saint *Paul* bids us, *but in every thing let your requeſts be made known to God*; if we perform the latter part, the former will naturally be conſequent thereon. Thus, in the laſt place, ſhould we do all things in the name of *Jeſus* (upon all occaſions praying to him, or which is all one, to God in his name) which that we may do, (that we are allowed and encouraged to do it) is alſo a privilege, and an advantage unvaluable.

Gen. 23. 7. Gen. 43. 14. 1 Pet. 5. 7. Pſal. 55. 22. Pſal. 9. 10. *Old Tranſl.* 70. 4 Pſal. 145. 18. Pſal. 112. 7, 8. Iſa. 26. 3. Philip. 4. 6, 7.

In ſo many waies and particular reſpects may we, and ought we to perform all we do in the name of *Jeſus*: We ſhould do every thing out of grateful affection and reſpect to him, as our chief Principle; every thing as his ſervants, aiming eſpecially at the pleaſing of him and promoting his honour, as our principal end; every thing according to his will and commandment, as our conſtant rule; every thing after his example, as our beſt pattern; every thing, in confidence of his gracious aſſiſtence and bleſſing, as our onely ſtrength and ſupport; every thing with hope of acceptance purely upon his accompt; every thing with thankful ſenſe and acknowledgment to God for the mercies and favours conveyed unto us by his means, conferred upon us for his ſake; every thing with humble invocation of him, or with prayer to God in his name: In ſum, every thing with a due and proper regard had to him; ſo that he be not paſſed over or left out in any thing we undertake; but come alwaies into conſideration, according as our relations to him, and our obligations to him do

require. In the performances of which duties the life indeed of our religion (of all our good practiſe, of all our devotion) doth conſiſt.

To all this I ſhall only ſubjoin the mention of one general duty, implied in all and each of thoſe we have propounded, which is this;

VIII. That our Lord *Jeſus* ſhould be frequently (and in a manner continually; alwaies, as to the habitual diſpoſition of our ſouls, actually upon all fit occaſions) preſent to our minds and thoughts. This, I ſay, is plainly implied in the former duties. For, how is it poſſible we ſhould perform all our actions (yea, utter all our words) with any ſort of regard to him, if we ſeldom think of him? Such is the nimbleneſs and activity of our minds, that it is feaſible enough to do thus; and, in reſpect to other objects, we commonly experience it done; for *animus eſt ubi amat*; what ever we affect, our mind, however otherwiſe imployed, will be thinking on it, 'tis hard to reſtrain our thoughts from it; (the covetous man's heart will be among his bags; the voluptuous man's mind will be in his diſhes; the ſtudious Perſon will be muſing on his notions, do he what he can.) Why then may we not as well, as often direct our minds toward our Lord, and mix the remembrance of him with all other imployments or entertainments of our thoughts? to do ſo is ſurely very requiſite, and very expedient toward our good practice. Things far diſtant, or long abſent, can have ſmall efficacy, or influence; 'tis ſo we ſee in natural, and 'tis no leſs ſo in moral cauſalities; wherein repreſentation to the fancy and memory have a force anſwerable to that, which real conjunction and approximation have in nature. As the heat and light of the Sun, the farther he goes, and the longer he ſtays from us, do the more (proportionably) decreaſe; ſo according to our leſs frequently, and leſs ſeriouſly thinking upon any object, our affection and our reſpect thereto decay. If therefore we deſire, according to our duty, to maintain in our hearts ſuch diſpoſitions (due affection and due reverence) toward *Jeſus*; if we intend to ſuit our actions accordingly with due regard to him; we ſhould, in order to thoſe purpoſes, apply this ſo neceſſary and uſeful mean, of frequently bending our minds toward him; the doing of which in likelihood, will conduce much to the ſanctifying our affections, and to the governing our actions in a conſtant performance of our duty. For we can hardly ſure (admitting we do ſeriouſly believe him to be ſuch as we profeſs to believe him) with any competent attention think of him; but that thought will be apt to reſtrain us from doing ill, to incite us to do well; ſince together with that thought, ſome of his excellent Perfections, ſome of our principal relations, and ſome of our great obligations to him (each of which hath much vertue and force to thoſe purpoſes) will interpoſe and repreſent themſelves. Frequently thinking of him, we ſhall ſometimes apprehend him with inceſſant toil, labouring in the ſervice of God, and in promoting the welfare of men; ſometime we ſhall imagine him undergoing all kind of contumelies and bitter pains; ſuffering by the cruel hands and tongues of ſpiteful men; we ſhall (as it were) behold him bleeding under the ſcourge, and hanging upon the croſs for our ſakes. Sometimes he will appear to our minds crowned with Majeſty, reigning in Sovereign Power and glory, having all things in ſubjection under his feet; ſometimes alſo he will be repreſented as our Judge, before whoſe tribunal we muſt all ſhortly ſtand, and be obliged to render an accompt of all our doings; which thoughts paſſing through our minds, will be apt to make ſome impreſſion upon our hearts, to have ſome influence

Act. 10. 38.

ence upon our actions. For, can that most amiable and most venerable *Idea* of a Person so entirely pure and holy, so meek and humble, so full of benignity and charity toward all men (particularly towards our selves) be otherwise then apt to forget some especial love and reverence toward him; than incline us strongly to do well, yea than teach us what and how we should do so, in conformity to such a Pattern set before us? it occurring to our thoughts, that he is our Lord and Master (who made us and maintains us, who purchased us to himself, and redeemed us from miserable slavery by his own heart-blood) how can it fail to raise in us some awe, some sence of duty toward him? Will not the apprehension of what he did and what he suffered for us powerfully mind us, that according to all justice and equity, in all ingenuity and gratitude we are bound to do only that which will please him? If we think of *Jesus*, when we are setting upon any action, shall we not thereupon be apt thus to interrogate our selves? Shall I do otherwise than he did, or would have done, so rendring my self unlike, or contrary to him? Shall I be so unfaithful to my glorious Master, as to disserve him, or to neglect his service? Shall I be so unworthy toward my gracious Redeemer, my best Friend, my most bountiful Benefactour, as to disoblige him, to wrong him, to dishonour him, to grieve him by thus doing? Shall I be so vain and rash as to cross him who is my King, able to controll and subdue me; as to offend him who is my Judge, resolved to condemn and punish me? Shall I wilfully forfeit that friendship and favour of his, upon which all my happiness doth depend? Shall I procure his displeasure and enmity, from which my utter ruin must inevitably follow? Such considerations have a natural connexion with our frequent thinking upon, and the Presence (as it were) of our Blessed Saviour to our minds; which therefore may be commended to us as an excellent instrument of bettering our hearts and our lives.

To conclude; Let us all alwaies remember, and consider, that we are Christians, related unto *Christ Jesus*, and called by his name, and as so, in his name, let us do all things.

Lord of all power and might; who art the Authour and giver of all good things; graft in our hearts the love of thy name; increase in us true religion; nourish us with all goodness; and of thy great mercy keep us in the same; through Jesus Christ *our Lord.*

SERMON II.

Of Being Imitatours of Christ.

1 COR. 4. 16.

I beseech you be followers of me; or, I exhort you be imitatours of me. Παρακαλῶ ὑμᾶς μιμηταί μου γίνεσθε.

SAint *Paul* by an impartial reflexion upon his heart and life being well assured, that he by the divine Spirit was enlightened with a certain knowledge of all necessary truth, and endued with plentiful measures of divine grace; being conscious of a sincere zeal in himself to honour

honour God and benefit men; being satisfi'd, that with integrity he did suit his conversation to the dictates of a good conscience, to the sure rule of God's Law, and to the perfect example of his Lord; that his intentions were pure and right; his actions warrantable, and the tenour of his life conspicuously blameless, doth, upon all occasions (not out of any self-conceitedness, arrogance, or ostentation, from which he, by frequent acknowledgment of his own defects and his miscarriages, and by ascribing all the good he had; or did, to the grace and mercy of God, doth sufficiently clear himself; but from an earnest desire to glorify God, and edifie his disciples) describe, and set forth his own Practice, proposing it as a *Rule*, pressing it upon them as an argument, an encouragement, an obligation to the performance of several duties. So by it he directeth and urgeth the *Ephesians* to a charitable compliance, or complaisance; a sweet and inoffensive demeanour toward other: *Give no offence* (saith he) *neither to the Jews nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God; even as I please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved; be ye followers of me*: so he guides and provokes the *Philippians* to endeavours of proficiency in grace, and the study of Christian Perfection: *Nevertheless* (saith he to them) *whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing: brethren, be followers together with me, and mark such as walk so, as ye have us for an example.* By the like instance and argument, he moveth the *Thessalonians* to a sober and orderly conversation, to industry in their calling, to self-denyal, and a generous disregard of private interest: *For your selves* (saith he) *know how ye ought to follow us; for we behaved not our selves disorderly among you; neither did we eat any man's bread for nought, but wrought with labours and travail day and night, that we might not be chargeable to any of you; not because we have not power, but to make our selves an example to you to follow us*: The same Persons he commendeth, as having by this means been induced to a patient constancy in faith and good works: *Ye know* (saith he) *what manner of men we were among you for your sake, and ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction*: The practice of all virtue and goodness, he also thus recommendeth under this rule and obligation: *Those things, which ye have learned and received, and heard, and seen in me, doe, and the God of Peace shall be with you.* Thus in our Text, (referring it to the context) he urgeth the Christians, his disciples at *Corinth*, to fidelity and diligence in the charges and affairs committed to them, to humility, patience and charity; wherein he declareth himself to have set before them an evident and exact Pattern. Which Practice of Saint *Paul* doth chiefly teach us two things: That we be careful to give; and that we be ready to follow good example: the latter of which duties more directly and immediately agreeth to the intent of this place; and it therefore I shall only now insist upon: the subject and scope of my discourse shall be to shew, that it is our duty and concernment to regard the Practices of good men, and to follow their example. To which purpose we may observe.

1 Cor. 4. 32, &c. 10. 1.

Phil. 3. 16, 17.

2 Thess. 3. 7.

1 Thes. 1. 5.

Phil. 4. 8, 9.

I. That it is the manner of the *Apostles*, upon all occasions, to inculcate this duty: we heard St. *Paul*: hear St. *James*: *Take* (saith he) *my brethren, the Prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord for an example of suffering affliction: Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy*; and the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*: *We desire* (saith he) *that every one of you*

Jam. 5. 10.

Jam. 5. 11.

Heb. 6. 11.

do

ſhew the ſame diligence to the full aſſurance of hope unto the end; that ye be not ſlothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promiſes: and again; *Wherefore ſeeing we are alſo compaſſed about with ſo great a cloud of witneſſes, let us lay aſide every weight, and the ſin which doth ſo eaſily beſet us, and let us run with patience the race that is ſet before us.* And St. *Peter*: *Ye wives be in ſubjection to your own husbands; even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord.* And wherever the eminent deeds of holy men are mentioned, it is done with an intimation at leaſt, or tacite ſuppoſition, that we are obliged to follow their example.

Heb. 12. 1.

1 Pet. 3. 1, 6.

II. We may conſider that to this end (that we might have worthy Patterns to imitate) the goodneſs of God hath raiſed up in all ages ſuch excellent Perſons, furniſhing them with rare endowments, and with continual influences of his grace aſſiſting them, to this purpoſe, that they might not onely inſtruct us with wholeſome doctrine, but lead us alſo by good example in the Paths of righteouſneſs. For certainly what St. *Paul* ſaith concerning the ſins and puniſhments of bad men, is no leſs applicable to the vertuous deeds and happy examples of good men: *All theſe things happened unto them for enſamples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.*

1 Cor. 10. 11.

III. *They are written for our admonition*; It was a ſpecial deſign of God's Providence in recording and recommending to our regard the divine hiſtories: They were not framed as monuments of a fruitleſs memory and fame to them; they were not propoſed to us as entertainments of our curioſity, as objects of wonder, as matters of idle diſcourſe; that unconcernedly we ſhould gaze upon them, or talk about them; as Children look on fine Gays; but they are ſet before us, as copies to tranſcribe; as lights to guide us in our way to happineſs: So that if we will not ingratefully fruſtrate the intentions of Divine Providence for our good, we muſt diſpoſe our ſelves to imitate thoſe illuſtrious Patterns of Vertue and Piety.

Μείζων δ' ὁδὸς περὶ τοῦ τὰ καθήκοντα εὑρεῖν ἢ μελέτη τῶν διορθωσάντων γεγραφὼς· ἐν παύταις γὰρ αἱ τῶν πεξέων ὑποθήκαι εὑρίσκονται, καὶ ὁ βίος τῶν μακαρίων ἀνδρῶν ἀναγέγραπται παράδειγμα, οἷον εἰκόνες πρὸς ἔμψυχοι τῆς καθ' ἑαυτὸν πολιτείας, τῷ μιμήματι τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἔργων περίκειται. Bal. ad Greg. Ep. 2.

IV. We may farther conſider that in the nature of the thing it ſelf good example is of ſingular advantage to us, as being apt to have a mighty virtue, efficacy and influence upon our practice: which conſideration ſhould much ingage us to regard it, applying it as an inſtrument of making our ſelves good, and conſequently of becoming happy. Good example is, as I ſay, of exceeding advantage to practice upon many accounts.

1. Examples do more compendiouſly, eaſily and pleaſantly inform our minds, and direct our practice, than precepts, or any other way or inſtrument of diſcipline. Precepts are delivered in an univerſal and abſtracted manner, naked, and void of all circumſtantial attire, without any intervention, aſſiſtence, or ſuffrage of ſence; and conſequently can have no vehement operation upon the fancy, and ſoon do fly the memory; like flaſhes of lightening, too ſubtile to make any great impreſſion, or to leave any remarkable footſteps, upon what they encounter; they muſt be expreſſed in nice terms, and digeſted in exact method; they are various; and in many diſjointed pieces conſpire to make up an entire body of direction; they do alſo admit of divers caſes, and require many exceptions,

or,

or restrictions which to apprehend distinctly, and retain long in memory, needs a tedious labour, and continual attention of mind, together with a piercing and steady judgment: But good example with less trouble, more speed, and greater efficacy causes us to comprehend the business, representing it like a Picture exposed to sense, having the Parts orderly disposed, and completely united, suitably cloathed and dressed up in its circumstances; contained in a narrow compass, and perceptible by one glance, so easily insinuating it self into the fancy, and durably resting therein: In it you see at once described the thing done, the quality of the actour, the manner of doing, the minute seasons, measures and adjuncts of the action; with all which you might not perhaps by numerous rules be acquainted; and this is the most facile, familiar and delightful way of instruction, which is by experience, history and observation of sensible events. A systeme of Precepts, though exquisitely compacted, is in comparison but a *Skeleton*, a dry, meagre, lifeless bulk, exhibiting nothing of person, place, time, manner, degree, wherein chiefly the flesh and blood, the colours and graces, the life and soul of things do consist; whereby they please, affect, and move us: But example imparts thereto a goodly corpulency, a life, a motion, renders it conspicuous, specious and active, transforming its notional universality into the reality of singular subsistence. This discourse is verified by various experience; for we find all Masters of Art and Science explicating, illustrating and confirming their general Rules and Precepts by particular examples: *Mathematicians* demonstrate their *Theorems* by *Schemes* and *Diagrams*, which in effect are but sensible instances; *Oratours* back their *Enthymemes* (or rational Argumentations) with *Inductions* (or singular Examples;) *Philosophers* alledge the Practice of *Socrates*, *Zeno*, and the like Persons of famous wisdom and vertue to authorize their doctrine: *Politicks* and civil Prudence is more easily and sweetly drawn out of good history, than out of Books *de Republica*. *Artificers* describe *Models*, and set Patterns before their Disciples, with greater success, than if they should deliver accurate Rules and Precepts to them: For who would not more readily learn to build by viewing carefully the Parts and Frame of a well contrived structure, than by a studious enquiry into the rules of *Architecture*; or to *draw* by setting a good Picture before him, than by merely speculating upon the laws of *Perspective*; or to write fairly and expeditely by imitating one good copy, than by hearkening to a thousand oral Prescriptions; the understanding of which, and faculty of applying them to practice, may prove more difficult, and tedious, than the whole practice it self as directed by a copy? Neither is the case much different in Moral concernments; one good example may represent more fully, and clearly to us the nature of a vertue, than any verbose description thereof can do: in sooner time, and with greater ease we may learn our duty by regarding the deportment of some excellent Person, than by attending to many Philosophical discourses concerning it: for instance, if we desire to know what Faith is, and how we should rely upon the divine Providence, let us propose to our consideration the practice of *Abraham*; wherein we may see the Father of the Faithful leaving a most pleasant countrey, the place of his nativity, and questionless most dear unto him under that notion; deserting his home and fixed habitation, his estate and patrimony;

Xen. Apomn. 4.

It was Xenophon's *observation, grounded upon his own Experience, that the memory of* Socrates *his Conversation did greatly profit his Acquaintance* (τὸ μεμνῆσθαι μὲ παρόντα ὠφέλει τὲς ἐθελήσαντας αὐτῷ συνεῖναι) *and* Seneca *saith that the Crowd of Philosophers, which followed the same Wise-man derived more of their* Ethicks *from his manners than his words* (plus ex moribus, quam ex verbis Socratis traxit) *Sen.* Ep. 11. *And he that shall reflect upon the Story concerning his behaviour, when he was by malicious envy persecuted to death, may perhaps be more edified thereby, than by all his subtile discourses about death, and the Souls state after it.*

patrimony; his kindred and acquaintance, to wander he knew not where in unknown Lands, with all his Family, leading an uncertain and ambulatory life in Tents, sojourning and shifting among strange People, devoid of Piety and Civility (among *Canaanites* and *Egyptians*) upon a bare confidence in the divine Protection and Guidance: we may see him aged 99 years, sensible of his own natural impotence, and an equal incapacity in his Consort as to such purposes, yet with a steady belief assuring himself, that from those dead stocks a numerous Progeny should spring, and that he who by all Power of Nature was unable to beget one Child, should by virtue of God's Omnipotent Word become the Father of a mighty Nation: we may see him upon the first summons of the Divine Command without scruple or hesitancy, readily and chearfully yeilding up his onely Son (the sole ground of his hope and prop of his family, to whose very Person the promise of multiplication was affixed) to be sacrificed and slain; not objecting to his own reason the palpable inconsistency of counsels so repugnant; nor anxiously labouring to reconcile the seeming contrariety between the divine promises and commands; but resolved as it were (with an implicite Faith in God) to believe things incredible, and to relye upon events impossible; contemplating these things let us say what discourse could so livelily describe the nature of true Faith, as this illustrious Precedent doth.

Again, he that would learn how to demean himself in resisting the assaults of temptation, let him consider that one carriage of *Joseph*; of him, together withstanding the courtships of an attractive beauty, and rejecting the solicitations of an imperious Mistris, advantaged by opportunities of privacy and solitude; when the refusal was attended with extream danger, and all the mischiefs which the disdain of a furious lust disappointed, of an outragious jealousie provoked, of a loving Master's confidence abused could produce; and all this by one of meanest condition in a strange Place, where no intercession, favour, or patronage of friends could be had, no equal examination of his cause might be expected; of him doing this, merely upon Principles of Conscience, and out of fear of God; (saying, *How can I do this great evil and sin against God*?) and he that considers this example, how can he be ignorant of his duty in the like case?

Again, would we learn wisdom, constancy and resolution in the conduct of honest, and worthy designs, let us set before our eyes the Pattern of *Moses*? and therein take notice, how he obeying divine instinct and direction, having embraced that noble Purpose of rescuing his Countrymen from the *Egyptian* Bondage, of settling them in a method of happy Policy, and in bringing them into the promised Land of their enjoyment, did behave himself in the execution thereof, with how indefatigable industry he solicited their cause with a fickle, and deceitful, stupid, and hard-hearted King; enduring frequent disappointments and repulses, together with furious storms of anger, and most terrible menaces from him: how having there surmounted all obstacles, and effectually enlarged the People from their restraint in *Egypt*; he led them on foot through a valley, encompassed with mountains of Sea; and after that undertook a tedious march (a march of 40 Years) through a wild, barren, and dry solitude (where no water was, but such as issued from the stony bowels of a rock; no food or means of subsistence, but such as was supplyed by the miraculous purveyance of Heaven) in the mean while resisting the continual invasions of open enemies, in great numbers with armed violence striving to obstruct his passage, and defeat his purpose; having also (which was

more) his patience conſtantly exerciſed in ſupporting the froward perverſeneſs of a moſt incredulous, and intractable People; which took all occaſions of complaint and mutiny againſt him; in conteſting with the factious rivality of envious Nobles, who repined at his ſucceſſes, and maligned his authority among them; in bearing the indiſcreet and untoward prevarications of his own moſt intimate friends and neareſt relations, complying with the wicked humours and deſires of the People; in ſuſtaining many other Perplexities and Croſſes; all which notwithſtanding he with inſuperable reſolution happily atchieved his glorious undertaking; and will not this example, attentively regarded, beyond the power of any other means or method, explain to us the way of induſtry, courage and perſeverance in good and worthy, though high and difficult enterprizes?

One inſtance more, and that of all moſt pertinent to our occaſion; would you be inſtructed, how faithfully to diſcharge the miniſterial, or any other office? With a ſtedfaſt attention then behold the excellent Pattern of St. *Paul*; conſider how in all his deſigns he zealouſly and ſingly aimed at the honour and ſervice of God, neglecting his own ſafety, quiet, credit, and all worldly accommodations for the advancement of them. How affectionately he tendred the good and welfare of thoſe, the care of whoſe ſpiritual condition was commended to him, uſing all his skill, care and ſtrength in promoting their edification; declaring himſelf for their good to be content, not onely for a time to be abſent from the Lord, being deprived of that happineſs which he otherwiſe impatiently groaned for, and was fully aſſured of; but deſirous, as it ſeems, to be ſecluded for ever from his bliſsful preſence by a dreadful *Anathema*, for their ſake. How prudently, meekly and humbly he demeaned himſelf toward them; becoming all things to all men, forming himſelf into all allowable ſhapes and colours; undergoing all ſorts of cenſure and imputations (of a deſpicable, an ignorant, a fooliſh Perſon) tempering his ſpeech and deportment to their capacities and needs, bearing their miſcarriages, and complying with their weakneſſes; parting freely with his own juſt liberty, pleaſure and ſatisfaction for their ſpiritual advantage. How generouſly he deſpiſed his own profit and eaſe, refuſing that ſupply he might with all reaſon and equity have required from them; chuſing to maintain himſelf with the labour of his own hands, and the ſweat of his brows; that he might render the Goſpel no-wiſe burdenſome, or offenſive to them. How vigilantly and couragiouſly he withſtood the miſchievous endeavours of falſe Brethren, and treacherous Seducers; earneſtly contending for the Churches peace and quiet againſt factious ſpirits, and for the ſubſtantial truths of the Goſpel againſt the pernicious devices of Hereticks and falſe Teachers. How patiently he ſuſtained all manner of Pains, Griefs, Travels, Wants, Loſſes, Hazards, Diſtreſſes, Diſappointments, Affronts and Reproaches for the Honour of God, the benefit of his ſpiritual Children, the diſcharge of his Duty, and ſatisfaction of his Conſcience: Theſe things, I ſay, regard, and then tell me, if he might not reaſonably inculcate this admonition, *Imitate me*; and if his example be not of rare uſe to inſtruct us, how faithfully we ſhould in our reſpective charges and employments demean our ſelves: I might in like manner inſtance how excellent a rule of Devotion the practice of the Royal Prophet may be unto us; how *Elias* his practice might teach us to be zealous Champions for truth and righteouſneſs; how they who would be good Judges, or honeſt Patriots may receive direction from the carriage of *Samuel*, *Daniel* and *Nehemiah*. But I proceed to ſay that farther,

Τιμωνῆς ἐν διδασκαλῳ δείκνυσι ὁ τῦ μαγείυ Ἰωβ δὲ ὑπομονῆς ὁ τῦ Μωσέως πραότητος ὁ τῦ Δαβὶδ &c. Chryſ. *T. V. p.* 656.

II. Good

II. Good Examples do not only inform; but they perſwade and incline our reaſon to good practice, commending it to us by plauſible authority: a way of reaſoning the moſt plain, eaſie and ſuitable to all mens capacities; leſs ſubject to errour, and doubt than any other; in particular caſes; whereby as it is alwaies more eaſie to know what is good and fit, ſo commonly it is moſt ſafe: there being few who can ſo well diſcern what is good, as they may reſt in the judgments of others. For that wiſe and vertuous Perſons do any thing, is a very probable argument, that we are obliged, and concerned to do the like; ſeeing ſuch Perſons may in all their actions be ſuppoſed to have an unbiaſſed regard to the rules of truth and juſtice. He therefore, who can ſay, that *Abraham*, or *David*, or St. *Paul* did ſo in ſuch a caſe, ſuppoſeth that he hath no ſmall reaſon to do the like; it is accounted pardonable, ye almoſt commendable, to err with ſuch Perſons; becauſe it is done with good appearance of reaſon; ſeeing ſuch Perſons were themſelves unlikely to err: *Will you* (ſaith *Cicero*) *commemorate to me* Scipio's, *and* Cato's, *and* Lælius's, *and ſay they did the ſame thing; though the thing diſpleaſes me; yet I cannot withſtand the authority of ſuch men; their authority is ſo great, that it can cover even the ſuſpicion of a fault,* 'Tis obvious in temporal concernments, how great a ſtroak this way of diſcourſe hath; how boldly men adventure their deareſt intereſts in following ſuch, whom they probably deem honeſt, and able to guide them: For inſtance, in travelling, if one being ignorant or doubtful of his way happen to meet a Perſon, whom he conceives able, and no-wiſe concerned, or diſpoſed to miſlead him, he without ſcruple follows him, and confidently relies on his direction: In like manner, all good men in the way of vertuous practice tending directly toward happineſs (our common journies end;) it being their deſign, their intereſt, and their endeavour not to miſtake the way, not to deflect from the right and neareſt courſe thereto, men are apt to think it reaſonable, and ſafe to accompany, in their Progreſs, or to preſs after them in their ſteps: and ſurely, next to a clear, and certain rule, there is not any more rational warrant for Practice, and conſequently no better inducement thereto, than ſuch good Precedents. Farther,

Africanos mihi, & Catones, & Lælios commemorabis, & eos feciſſe idem dices, quamvis res mihi non placeat, tamen contra hominum authoritatem probare non potuero. Magna eſt hominum authoritas, & etiam tanta, ut delicti ſuſpicionem tegere poſſit. Cic. *in* Verr. 3.

III. Examples do incite our Paſſions, and impel them to the performance of duty. They raiſe hope, they enflame courage, they provoke emulation, they urge upon modeſty, they awaken curioſity, they affect fancy; they ſet in motion all the ſprings of Activity. It may not be amiſs to ſhew how, particularly,

1. They raiſe hope, by diſcovering to us and aſſuredly proving the feaſibleneſs of matters propounded, or the poſſibility of ſucceſs in undertaking good deſigns, and that by the beſt and moſt convincing of arguments, experience. Nothing ſo depreſſeth hope, and advanceth deſpondency as an apprehenſion of impoſſibility, or which is equivalent thereto an extream difficulty (appearing to ſurmount our preſent forces) in the buſineſs to be attempted: of ſuch a conceit deſperation ſeemeth a reaſonable conſequence. For τὸ ἀδύνατον ἐρᾶν μανικὸν, 'tis *a madneſs to aim at impoſſibilities*; and ſuch conſidering the geat infirmity of humane nature, its ſtrong propenſions to evil, and averſeneſs from good, together with the manifold impediments, and allurements objecting themſelves in the way of good practice, all duties as barely repreſented in Precepts,

and preſſed by rational inducements might ſeem to be, if good example did not clearly demonſtrate them to be poſſible, yea ſometimes facile; even thoſe, which upon a ſuperficial view do ſeem moſt difficult, and inſuperable by our weak endeavour. The *Stoical* doctrine, which deſcribed a fine and ſtately Portraicture of vertue; and inculcated very ſtrict rules (a cloſe following of God and nature, a perfect victory over ſelf, the ſubduing all Paſſions and over-ruling all corporeal Appetites; an entire freedom, compoſure and tranquillity of mind; a total indifferency in reſpect of Fortune, and all external events; with the like duties, rarely practiſed, although upon all accounts acknowledged conformable to reaſon) was therefore by moſt rejected as uſeleſs, or exploded as ridiculous, as being preſumed to propound matters purely imaginary and unpracticable, yet he that had ſeen this doctrine in great meaſure exemplified by *Zeno*, the firſt Maſter of it, would have had no ſuch reaſon to contemn it, nor to deſpair of practiſing according to it, if he would ſeriouſly endeavour it: exemplified, I ſay, by *Zeno*, whereof we have an illuſtrious teſtimony from a ſolemn decree of the *Athenians*: ἐπειδὴ Ζήνων Μνασέου, &c. Laert. *in* Zen. *Whereas* Zeno *the Son of* Mnaſeas *the Cittican, having many years profeſſed Philoſophy in this City, and as well in all other things hath demeaned himſelf like a good man, as particularly exhorting the young men, who went to be inſtructed by him, hath provoked them to vertue, and ſobriety; withal exhibiting his own life a pattern of the beſt things anſwerable to the diſcourſes he uſed to make; it is therefore auſpiciouſly decreed by the people, that* Zeno *the Son of* Mnaſeas *be ſolemnly praiſed and crowned (according to the uſage) with a golden crown; and that a monument be erected for him at the publick charge in the* Ceramicum (the Place where thoſe were interr'd, who had bravely expoſed their lives for publick defence.) This was indeed a noble atteſtation, and a comely reſpect exhibited to a vertuous converſation; making in ſome meaſure a ſatisfaction for the heinous affront done thereto, when inſtead of honouring it with a crown, they rewarded it with a cup of Poiſon, given to the excellent *Socrates*. Suitably to which teſtimony *Seneca* ſaith of *Cleanthes*, that his vertuous Practice depended more upon the obſervation of *Zeno*'s life, than the information of his doctrine. *Zenonem Cleanthes non expreſſiſſet ſi eum tantummodo audiſſet; vita ejus interfuit, ſecreta perſpexit, obſervavit illum an ex formula ſua viveret. Cleanthes* (ſaith he) *had not ſo nearly reſembled* Zeno, *if he had onely attended to his diſcourſes: he was preſent to his life, he took notice of his private carriage, he obſerved whether his practice did ſuit to his doctrine.* So that *Stoiciſm* it ſelf which ſpeaketh ſuch Prodigies, was it ſeems founded not onely upon big words, the iſſues of a ſpeculative fancy, but more upon the good Practice of its firſt Maſter and Inſtitutour. And indeed he that would effectually perſwade the undertaking of any enterpriſe, muſt either ſuppoſe it, or prove it effectible; and the moſt eaſie, the moſt evident way of proving it is by Example. *Men* (ſaith *Pliny Junior* well) *are better inſtructed by examples, which have in them chiefly this advantage, that they do prove the things may be done, which they enjoyn.* And, *Humane infirmity* (ſaith *Salvian* to the ſame purpoſe) *requires the aſſiſtence of example, that it may more eaſily now perform that, which it knows others to have before done; all poſterity being admoniſhed by hearing that what hath once been done, may be done again*: And, *The Example* (ſaith S. *Bernard*) *of a work done is a lively and efficacious Oration, eaſily perſwading,*

Chryſ. *Tom.* 1. *p.* 65.

Melius hominis exemplis docentur, quæ imprimis hoc boni habent, quæ approbant, quæ præcipiunt fieri poſſe. Plin. Jun. *Panig.*

Adjuvari ſe exemplis exoptat humana infirmitas, quo facilius ipſa nunc faciat, quæ alios feciſſe ante cognoſcat; dum admonetur auditu ætas omnis fieri poſſe, quod factum eſt. Salv. *ad Eccl. Cath.*

Sermo quidam vivus, & efficax exemplum operis eſt, facile perſuadens quod intendimus, dum facilibile probat eſſe, quod ſuademus. Bern. *de Reſur. Serm.* 3.

Ex aliorum factis fieri poſſe credunt, quod forte cum putant fieri non poſſe pigriſcunt. Cyp. *Ep.* l. 2. 2.

ding what we intend, by proving that feasible, which we strive to perswade unto. Upon which score we therefore are exceedingly obliged to those holy men who by their Practice have assured us, that the highest duties exacted of us by our religion (the mortification of unreasonable desires, the suppression of irregular passions; the loving and blessing our Enemies; the renouncing worldly vanities and pleasures, the rejoicing in afflictions, the voluntary abdication of our estates in some cases, yea, exposing life it self to inevitable hazard and loss) are not chimerical Propositions of impossible Performances; but duties (if we shall seriously and vigorously apply our endeavours to them, and suffer our hopes to be elevated by their example) really practicable: Piety abstractedly view'd in Precept may seem an aiery Project, a Name, a Notion; but it being seen in Example will prove a matter substantial, true and feasible. A direct and pure speculation thereof may dazle our sight, and dash our hopes; but as being reflected from Persons practising it we may bear its lustre, and hope to attain it.

2. Examples do enflame courage. So the Apostle to the *Hebrews* signifieth, when to this purpose he intimateth that he mentioned and setteth before them the examples of the *Patriarchs*; that he thereby might excite their courage, and cause them resolutely to undertake that obedience, and patiently to undergo those afflictions, which they performed and sustained; *that* (saith he) *ye be not slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises.* For that heat, and active Spirit, which in some degree resideth in all mens breasts, is by example kindled, as one flame is kindled by the contact, or approach of another. How many Persons timorous, and averse from dangerous undertakings, have notwithstanding become very bold and adventrous in war by the discipline and influence of an exemplary valour? 'Tis *Plutarch*'s observation concerning *Cæsar*'s Souldiers, that they who in service under other Commanders did not exceed the ordinary rate of courage, nor excel their fellows, did yet when he lead them become irresistibly valiant, being animated and inspired by his unparallel'd Gallantry; and who is there indeed so incurably heartless? so desperately sluggish or stupid, whom the sight of a valiant Leader, marching before into the mouth of danger, will not infuse fire and vigour into, and instigate forward into a participation of brave adventure? So example doth by a kind of contagion insinuate courage, or inveagle men thereinto; beside that it is a kind of daring, and proclaimeth him a Dastard that will not imitate it; which imputation the lowest courage of Man can hardly digest; and will therefore by doing somewhat answerable strive to decline it.

Heb. 6. 12.

——— *Fortis in armis Cæsaris Labienus erat.*

3. Again, Examples provoke emulation; which is another strong Principle of activity; moving us earnestly to desire, (and thence eagerly to pursue) whatever good, privilege, or advantage we see another to enjoy. To observe another of the same nature and capacities with our selves to have shone with an illustrious vertue, to be consecrated to Posterity by a *lasting* fame, and to be crowned with glorious rewards above; what other reflections of thought can it produce in us, than such as these? shall he a man, like my self, endued with the same faculties, appetites and passions; subject to the same infirmities, temptations, needs, cares and encumbrances of life, shall he by noble dispositions of Soul, and worthy Performances render himself highly considerable; while

Chrys. T. 1. p. 77. T. 6. p. 148. T. 5. Orat. 101. Φύσει γὰρ φιλόκαλον ἔσχε τὸ φύσαν τῶν ἀνθρώπων οὐδεὶς ὁ κύριος, &c.

while I by ſordid qualities, and unworthy Practices debaſe, and render my ſelf deſpicable? ſhall he leave behind him monuments of eternal Praiſe, while I do nothing worthy of regard or memory? ſhall he enjoy the favour of the great God, and the comforts of a bleſſed Eternity, but I be wholly deprived of that joyful Eſtate, and plunged into endleſs ſorrows, and deſperate miſery? ſhall a *Joſeph* ſtoutly reſiſt and overcome the ſtrongeſt Temptations, and I be eaſily baffled by the leaſt ſolicitation of Vice? ſhall a ſtripling *David* gloriouſly triumph over Giants, while I baſely am vanquiſhed by Dwarfs? ſhall *Job* be ſtripped of all his Goods with contentedneſs, and endure the moſt grievous Pains with Patience, while I am diſcompoſed for any ſmall loſs, and diſmayed by the leaſt croſs accident? ſhall *Abraham* here by his faith, and obedience attain to be called the Friend of God, and reſt for ever in his glorious and happy Boſome, while I deſervedly am refuſed the honour and comfort of that Heavenly communion here, and ſhall hereafter be caſt out from that bliſful Preſence into the diſmal manſions of wretched folly and wickedneſs? Did *Paul*, once a ſtubborn Jew, a blind Phariſee, a grievous Blaſphemer, a bloody Perſecutour, by a ſeaſonable Converſion repair his State, approve himſelf to God by an eminent zeal for his glory, undergo reſtleſs Pains, run deſperate hazards, and endure all ſorts of diſtreſſes for the propagation of Gods Heavenly truth, obtaining thence a never-fading crown of Glory in Heaven, and a perpetual renown upon Earth; and ſhall I then, who from my youth have been educated in the moſt true and holy religion, who have by ſolemn engagements devoted my ſelf thereto; who may without any trouble, or danger profeſs and practice according to that holy diſcipline, proceed in wicked courſes, provoking God's wrath, and attracting his vengeance upon me? No: ſince the capacities are alike, ſince the means are common, ſince the rewards of Piety are promiſcuouſly expoſed and offered unto all, why ſhould I by deplorable perverſeneſs or negligence ſuffer my ſelf to be deprived of it and its benefits? Why ſhall not I become as good, as commendable, as happy as any other man? Theſe are the conceits and voices of natural emulation, that mighty Paſſion (ſo often and by many effects it diſcovereth it ſelf to be) implanted in our original conſtitution to be as a ſpur and incentive ſtimulating, and enflaming us unto the ready undertaking, and vigorous purſuit of good purpoſes; the which perhaps hath produced more noble effects, than any other Paſſion, or Inclination of our Souls: for all manner of excellency in knowledge, in proweſs, in vertue how often doth it iſſue from this ſource? Doth not the admired fame of men notable for Learning (recorded in Story, or ſubject to preſent obſervation) and a jealouſie of being ſurpaſſed in accompliſhments competent to humane nature, ſharpen the appetite, and rouſe the induſtry of moſt Scholars, whom neither the love of knowledge, nor its apparent uſefulneſs could any-wiſe perſwade to bear ſo much toil in acquiſt thereof? Do not all Hiſtories acquaint us, that the moſt gallant enterprizes and exploits of famous Warriours have derived their beginning from an emulation of the glory purchaſed by their Anceſtours? (wiſdom and valour have thus eſpecially been propagated; one Man's ſignal excellency being Parent to the like in many other.) And that this Paſſion may in like manner be ſubſervient to the Production of Vertue, and Piety, is plain enough from parity of reaſon, and from experience; and we have (for farther argument thereof) the *Apoſtles* Practice uſing it to this purpoſe: St. *Paul* employed it as an engine for the converſion of his dear countreymen;

—Tentanda via eſt, qua me quoque poſſim
Tollere humo. —

countreymen; whom by raising in them a jealousie of being out-stripped (in God's favour, and its effects) by the *Gentiles*, he endeavoureth to provoke to the embracing of the Christian Faith: *I speak to you Gentiles* (saith he) *in as much as I am the Apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify my Office, εἴ πως παραζηλώσω μου τὴν σάρκα, if by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them.* And St. *James* instigateth us unto fervency of Prayer, by minding us, that *Elias was a man of like passions with our selves*; yet was able by his Prayers to shut and open Heaven, to procure barrenness and fertility to the Earth. And the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* chargeth us, to *consider one another, εἰς παροξυσμὸν ἀγάπης καὶ καλῶν ἔργων, so as to provoke one another* (or by mutual emulation to sharpen one another) *to charity and good works.*

Rom. 11. 14. 10. 19. Jam. 5. 17.

4. Examples do work upon modesty, that *preserver and guardian of vertue*, as *Cicero* calls it. For every good action of another doth upbraid, reproach and shame him, who acteth not conformably thereto. Can we without a trembling heart, and blushing forehead view the Practices of the ancient Saints, if ours be altogether unlike them? If they to please God, and secure their salvation did undergo such *prodigious* Pains in assiduous devotions, abstinencies, watchings, and we contrary-wise are extreamly sluggish, cold and negligent in the Performance of our ordinary duties; if they willingly renounced all sensual complacencies, and we either cherish our selves in a soft delicacy of life, or wallow in a profane dissolution of manners; if they to free themselves from distracting cares voluntarily disburthened themselves of all needless encumbrances, and we are wholly busie in *heaping up* wealth, and driving on worldly interests; if they gladly embraced and endured the sharpest afflictions, and we are terrified by the thought, are overwhelmed by the sense of the least disappointment, or distastful occurrence; how can we without extream regret of mind, and confusion of face consider their Practice, or compare it with ours? It is a profligate impudence of him that can daily hear, and read the Stories of their doings, without being deeply sensible, and ashamed at the dissonance appearing between their course of life, and his.

Custos omnium virtutum, dedecus fugiens, laudemque maximè consequens verecundia est. Cic. *Part. Rhet.*

5. Example awakens that curiosity, which is natural to us, and of no mean efficacy upon our actions. For whatever we see done, we are apt to be inquisitive concerning it; why and to what purpose it is done, what the grounds are, and what the fruits of the Performance; especially if the matter seem considerably important, and the action proceedeth from a Person deserving respect; whereof having passed some competent judgment, we are by the same instinct of curiosity farther transported into a desire of discerning by our trial and experience whether the event correspondeth to our expectation; so are we easily induced to imitate the actions of others. By which means as vice ordinarily is conceived, and propagated (men by a prepostrous and perverse curiosity being inveagled to try what they see others affect or enjoy) so may vertue also by the same means be engendred and nourished; the general ways of producing and maintaining those contrary habits being alike. As therefore 'tis a great blemish and reproach to humane nature, that,

——*Faciles imitandis*
Turpibus & pravis omnes sumus——

Juven.

we (as the *Satyrist* truly observeth of us) *have a great proclivity to follow naughty examples*; so there is from hence some amends; that we have also some

ſome inclination to imitate good, and worthy Precedents; the which is ſomewhat more ſtrong and vigorous, becauſe countenanced and encouraged by the approbation of reaſon, our moſt noble faculty.

6. Examples alſo do pleaſe the mind and fancy in contemplation of them, thence drawing a conſiderable influence upon practice. No kind of ſtudious entertainment doth ſo generally delight as Hiſtory; or the tradition of remarkable examples: even thoſe, who have an abhorrency or indiſpoſition toward other ſtudies (who have no *genius* to apprehend the more intricate ſubtilities of ſcience; nor the patience to purſue rational conſequences) are yet often much taken with hiſtorical narrations; theſe ſtriking them with a delectable variety of accidents, with circumſtantial deſcriptions, and ſenſible repreſentations of objects do greatly affect, and delight their fancies; eſpecially the relation of notable adventures, and rare accidents is wont to be attended with great pleaſure and ſatisfaction. And ſuch are thoſe, which preſent to us the lives and examples of holy men, abounding with wonders of providence and grace: no attempts ſo gallant, no exploits ſo illuſtrious as thoſe, which have been atchieved by the faith and patience, by the prudence and courage of the ancient Saints; they do far ſurpaſs the moſt famous atchievements of *Pagan* Heroes: It was (I dare ſay) more wonderful, that *Abraham* with his retinue of Houſhold Servants ſhould vanquiſh four potent and victorious Kings; and that *Gideon* with three hundred unarmed men ſhould diſcomfit a vaſtly numerous hoſt; Than that *Alexander* with a well appointed army of ſtout and expert Souldiers ſhould overturn the *Perſian* Empire. The Siege of *Jericho* is ſo far more remarkable, than thoſe moſt famous ones of *Numantia*, and *Saguntus*, as it is more ſtrange, that the blaſt of Trumpets, and the noiſe of People ſhouting ſhould demoliſh Walls, than the ſhaking them with Rams, or diſcharging maſſy Stones againſt them. And he that carefully will compare the deeds of *Sampſon* and *Hercules*, ſhall find, that one true exploit performed by the former doth much in force, and ſtrangeneſs ſurmount the twelve fabulous labours of the other: No triumphs indeed are comparable to thoſe of Piety; no trophies are ſo magnificent and durable, as thoſe which victorious faith erecteth: that hiſtory therefore, which reports the *res geſta*, the acts and ſufferings of moſt pious men, muſt in reaſon be eſteemed not onely the moſt uſeful, but alſo the moſt pleaſant; yeilding the ſweeteſt entertainment to well diſpoſed minds; wherein we ſee vertue expreſſed, not in bare *idea* onely, but in actual life, ſtrength, motion; in all its beauty, and ornaments: than which no ſpectacle can be more ſtately, no object more grateful can be preſented to the diſcerning eye of reaſon.

7. We may farthermore conſider, that God hath provided, and recommended to us one example, as a perfect ſtandard of good practice; the example of our Lord; the which declareth the uſe, and efficacy of good example; as one principal inſtrument of Piety. That indeed is the moſt univerſal, abſolute and aſſured Pattern; yet doth it not ſuperſede the uſe of other examples: Not onely the valour and conduct of the General, but thoſe of inferiour officers, yea, the reſolution of common Souldiers do ſerve to animate their fellows: the Stars have their ſeaſon to guide us, as well as the Sun; eſpecially when our eyes are ſo weak, as hardly to bear the day. Even, conſidering our infirmity, inferiour examples, by their imperfection ſometime have a peculiar advantage: Our Lords moſt imitable practice did proceed from an immenſe vertue of divine grace, which we cannot arrive to; it in it ſelf is ſo perfect and high, that we may

not ever reach it; looking upon it may therefore ſometimes dazle, and diſcourage our weakneſs; but other good men had aſſiſtences in meaſure, ſuch as we may hope to approach unto; they were ſubject to the difficulties, which we feel; they were expoſed to the perils of falling, which we fear: we may therefore hope to march on in a reaſonable diſtance after them; we may, by help of the ſame grace come near in tranſcribing their leſs exact copy.

To conclude, ſince upon ſo many accounts we are obliged to follow good examples; ſince they are of ſo great uſe toward our proceeding in the way to happineſs; thence they conduce to the clear inſtruction of our underſtanding, to the forcibly inclining our reaſon, to the vehement excitement of our Paſſions, to the delightfully affecting our imagination in ſubſerviency to good practice; let us make that due and profitable uſe of them, which we ſhould and may do. Let us with diligent attention peruſing the ſacred hiſtory meditate upon the lives of holy men therein propounded as Patterns of a perſevering Faith in God, and conſcionable obedience to his commandments. Let the light of their exemplary practice in all kind of piety and vertue continually ſhine upon our ſouls, to direct our minds, to inflame our affections, to quicken our reſolutions, to detect the errours, and correct the faults of our lives, that we imitating their vertuous, and pious converſation may partake of thoſe comfortable rewards; of that joy, and bliſs, whereof they reſt poſſeſſed; the which God Almighty, and our Bleſſed Saviour the authour and finiſher of our faith by his gracious aid and bleſſing grant unto us; to whom for ever be all glory and praiſe for ever and ever. *Amen.*

SERMON III.

Abiding in Chriſt to be demonſtrated by walking as Chriſt did.

1 JOHN. 2. 6.

He that ſaith he abideth in him, ought himſelf alſo ſo to walk as he walked.

TO *abide in Chriſt*, to *be in Chriſt*, to *put on Chriſt*; and reciprocally *Chriſt's being in us, living, dwelling, being formed in us*; and the like expreſſions occurring in H. Scripture, do not denote any Phyſical inherence, or Eſſential conjunction between *Chriſt* and us (ſuch as thoſe who affect unintelligible miſteries rather than plain ſenſe, would conceit) but onely that mutual relation accruing from

Rom. 8. 10. Gal. 2. 20. Eph. 3. 17. Gal. 4. 19.

our profeſſion of being *Chriſt*'s Diſciples, our being inſerted into his body the Church, being governed by his Laws, partaking of his Grace, with all the privileges of the Goſpel, relying upon his promiſes, and hoping for eternal ſalvation from him. By vertue of which relation we may be ſaid in a myſtical, or moral manner to be united to him, deriving ſtrength and ſuſtenance from him, as the members from the head, the branches from the tree, the other parts of the building from the foundation; by which ſimilitudes this myſterious union is uſually expreſſed in Scripture; in effect briefly, to be in, or to abide in *Chriſt* implyeth no more, but our being truly, in faith and practice, Chriſtians: ſo that the meaning of St. *John*'s words ſeemeth plainly and ſimply to be this; Whoever pretends to be a Chriſtian (that is, to believe the Doctrine, and embrace the Diſcipline of *Chriſt*) ought to walk (that is, is obliged to order the whole courſe of his life and actions) as *Chriſt* walked (that is, as *Chriſt* did live and converſe in the World:) Or, it is the duty of every one, profeſſing Chriſtianity, to conform his life to the pattern of *Chriſt*'s life, to follow his example, to imitate his practice. This is the importance of the words, this the ſubject of our preſent diſcourſe.

I. For illuſtration and confirmation of which point, we may obſerve, that the H. *Apoſtles* do, upon all occaſions, aſſume this ſuppoſition, when they would perſwade their Diſciples to the practice of any vertue, or performance of any duty; enforcing their exhortations, by repreſenting the practice of *Chriſt*, as an unqueſtionable ground of obligation, and an effectual inducement thereto. Hence they incite them to holineſs: *But* (ſaith St. *Peter*) *as he that hath called you is holy, ſo be ye holy in all manner of converſation*; to charity: *And walk in love* (ſaith Saint *Paul*) *as Chriſt alſo loved us*: to patience; *Becauſe* (ſaith St. *Peter*) *Chriſt alſo ſuffered for us, leaving us an example, that we ſhould follow his ſteps.* And *Let us* (ſaith the *Apoſtle* to the *Hebrews*) *run with patience the race that is ſet before us, looking unto Jeſus the authour and finiſher of our faith, who for the joy that was ſet before him endured the croſs*: to humility; *Let* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *the ſame mind be in you, which was alſo in Chriſt Jeſus, who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God, but made himſelf of no reputation*: to charitable compliance, and inoffenſive demeanour toward others, intimated by St. *Paul*, when he ſaies, *Even as I pleaſe all men in all things, not ſeeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they might be ſaved*; *Be ye followers of me, as I am of Chriſt*; and again, *Let every one pleaſe his neighbour for his good to edification*; *for even Chriſt pleaſed not himſelf.* Thus do the *Apoſtles* take all occaſion, from the like practice of *Chriſt*, to perſwade the performance of duty; and the ſtrength of their argument lyeth upon the evidence of this ſuppoſition, that all profeſſing themſelves Chriſtians are eſpecially obliged to imitate *Chriſt*'s example. And their authority may be backed and inforced by ſeveral reaſons.

1 Pet. 1. 15. Eph. 5. 2. 1 Pet. 2. 21. Heb. 12. 1. Phil. 2. 2. 1 Cor. 10. 33. 11. 1. Rom. 15. 2.

II. Doing ſo hath a reaſonableneſs and decency grounded upon our relations to *Chriſt*: it is fit and comely that the manners of the Diſciple ſhould be regulated by thoſe of his Maſter; that the Servant ſhould not, in his garb and demeanour, diſſent or vary from his Lord; that the Subject ſhould conform his humour to the faſhion of his Prince; eſpecially that we ſhould thus comply and conform to ſuch a Maſter, ſuch a Lord, ſuch a Prince, whom (upon higheſt conſiderations) by a moſt voluntary choice, and in a moſt ſolemn manner we have abſolutely devoted our ſelves unto:

unto: This reaſon our Lord doth himſelf urge: *Ye* (ſaith he to his Diſciples) *call me Maſter, and Lord, and ye ſay well, for ſo I am; if I then your Lord and Maſter have waſhed your feet, ye ought alſo to waſh one anothers feet.* Joh. 13. 13.

III. Following *Chriſt*'s example is requiſite to demonſtrate the ſincerity of our faith, love and reverence to him. It is the moſt natural way of teſtifying affection and reſpect to imitate the manners of thoſe perſons, who are the objects of thoſe acts and diſpoſitions; to eſteem what they approve, to delight in what they affect, and conſequently (ſince actions do proceed from affections) to do as they do. Contrary actions are plain arguments of contrary judgments, inclinations and affections: Who can imagine we ſincerely believe in *Chriſt*, or heartily love him, or truly honour him, that ſeeth us to loath what he liked, or affect what he deteſted; to contemn what he prized, or value what he deſpiſed; to neglect what he purſued, or embrace what he avoided? but if our lives reſemble his, any Man will thence collect our reſpect and affection to him: this argument our Saviour doth alſo intimate: *By this* (ſaith he) *ſhall all men know ye are my diſciples, if ye love one another*; that is, it will be an evident ſign and ſtrong argument, that ye really do believe in, love and honour me, if ye imitate me in my charity. Joh. 13. 35.

IV. By pretending to be Chriſtians we acknowledge the tranſcendent goodneſs, worth and excellency of our Saviour; that he was incomparably better, and wiſer than any perſon ever was, or could be; that he alwaies acted with the higheſt reaſon, out of the moſt excellent diſpoſition of mind, in order to the beſt purpoſes; and that his practice therefore reaſonably ſhould be the rule and pattern of ours. For the beſt and exacteſt in every kind is the meaſure of the reſt. All that would obtain exquiſite skill in any art, or faculty, think beſt to imitate the works of the beſt Maſters therein; A Painter to draw after the pieces of *Zeuxis* or *Apelles* (of *Raphael*, or *Titian*) an Oratour to ſpeak in the ſtyle of *Cicero*, or *Demoſthenes*; a Souldier to emulate the military Atchievements of *Hannibal*, or *Cæſar*: in like manner, reaſon requireth, if we would live well and happily, that we ſhould endeavour to conform our practice to that of our Saviour, the moſt perfect mirrour of all vertue and goodneſs.

V. The practice of our Saviour did throughly agree with his Doctrine and Law; he requireth nothing of us which he did not eminently perform himſelf. He *fulfilled* in deed as well as taught in word *all righteouſneſs*. He was not *ignava opera, Philoſopha ſententia*; like thoſe Maſters of Philoſophy, ſo frequently taxed and derided by the *Satyriſts*; who, by a horrid garb, ſupercilious looks, and loud declamations, would ſeem to diſcountenance thoſe vices which themſelves practiſed; nor like thoſe hypocritical Lawyers in the Goſpel, who laded other men with *heavy burthens*, ſuch as themſelves would *not touch with one of their fingers*: No, he impoſed nothing on us, which he did not firſt bear upon his own ſhoulders: the ſtrictneſs of his life did, in all reſpects, correſpond with the ſeverity of his precepts; or rather did indeed much exceed them. They therefore who pretend to believe his doctrine, and avow themſelves bound to obſerve his Law, are conſe-

Οὐδὲν ἰσχνότερον τῶν κατὰ λόγους φιλοσοφούντων. Chryſ.

Ὧν τὸ σῶμα τῶν τρόπων κατήγορον. Naz.

Luc. 11. 46.

quently engaged to follow his practice, in which his Doctrine and Law are ſignally exemplified.

VI. It being the deſign of divine goodneſs, in ſending our Saviour, to render us good and happy, to deliver us from ſin and miſery, to inſtruct us in the knowledge, and excite us to the practice of all vertue; and thereby to qualify us for the enjoyment of a bleſſed immortality; effecting all this in a way agreeable to our natural condition and capacity; there could not be deviſed any more powerful means, or more convenient method of accompliſhing thoſe excellent purpoſes, than by propounding ſuch an example, and obliging us to comply therewith: the which may appear, 1. by conſidering in general the advantage and efficacy that good example is apt to have upon practice; 2. by weighing the peculiar excellency of our Saviour's example above all others, in order to thoſe ends; and 3. by ſurveying the particular inſtances of imitable goodneſs repreſented in the life of our Saviour.

1. Good example is naturally an effectual inſtrument of good practice; for that it doth moſt compendiouſly, pleaſantly and eaſily inſtruct; repreſenting things to be done at one view, in a full body, cloathed with all their modes and circumſtances; it recommends them to us, by the moſt plain and plauſible way of reaſoning, (and withal the moſt ſure and ſafe) the authority of wiſe and good men; it encourageth, by evidently declaring the practicableneſs of rules preſcrib'd; it kindleth and rowſeth mens courage, by a kind of contagion, as one flame doth kindle another; it raiſeth a worthy emulation of doing laudable things, which we ſee done; or of obtaining a ſhare in the commendations and rewards of vertue. It urgeth modeſty, breeding ſhame and regret in them who act contrarily thereto; it awakeneth curioſity, thereby producing a deſire to make trial of what it propoſeth; it affecteth and pleaſeth the fancy, thereby inſinuating an approbation, admiration and liking of the good things, which it repreſenteth; briefly, it exciteth and engageth all our paſſions, ſetting on work all thoſe powerful ſprings of activity, it conſequently is, in its own nature, an efficacious mean of good practice. This we may, in general, ſay of all good examples; but,

2. More eſpecially the example of *Chriſt* doth in efficacy and influence upon good practice, ſurpaſs all others; upon ſeveral accompts.

Firſt, In that it is a ſure and infallible rule; an entire and perfect rule of practice; deficient in no part, ſwerving in no circumſtance from truth and right, which privileges are competent to no other example. The practice of the beſt men is not alwaies to be imitated, nor ever abſolutely as a certain ground of action; it is to be (ſo far as we have ability) conſidered, examined and compared to more certain rules; (the Divine Laws, and the Principles of right Reaſon) according to their agreement with which they are to be followed; they are indeed (before trial of the caſe) probable arguments of what is done by them being good and lawful; they do outweigh ſlender and obſcure reaſonings about the goodneſs of things; they may, when opportunity, leiſure, or ability of farther enquiry and judgment about things are wanting, ſerve to direct us; but they are not throughly ſure rules, or perfect meaſures of our duty. We ſhould beware leaſt we be ſeduced even by holy perſons; and therefore with circumſpection and caution ſhould peruſe their ſtory, and contemplate

plate their demeanour; whereof those which are explicitely commended, or allowed by the divine judgment, we may, being assured that we are in the same circumstances, safely follow (taking them for monitories, encouragements and excitements to our duty) but those that are directly condemned by the same sentence, or apparently devious from God's Law, we as carefully should avoid; such as are of a doubtful and unaccountable nature we are to suspend about, and not to ground upon; nor to argue from the fact to the rightfulness of them; the safest way being always (as we are able) to have recourse to the simple, plain and perspicuous precepts of God, and dictates of reason. For the best men have been alwaies subject to errours and infirmities; the fountain of original corruption in them was never so dried up, or closely stopped, but that some impure streams have bubbled forth; the fire of natural concupiscence was never so utterly quenched, but that sometimes it would blaze, or smoke out in bad actions; that intestine enemy (the flesh) was never throughly subdued, nor the body of sin quite slain and mortified in any other mortal man: Good men have ever had some foul spots, or deforming wrinkles appearing in the beauteous face of their conversation; they have had their inequalities and indispositions of humour; their ebbs of devotion; their fits of sloth; their wanton freaks; their slips often, and sometimes their falls; they have been subject to be deluded by mistake, to be surprized by inadvertency, to be transported by passion, to be swayed by temper, to be biassed by interest, to be allured by temptation into false and unwarrantable proceedings; they might sometime fail in the substance, oftner in the degree, in the manner, in the circumstances of action; we find them often complaining of their proneness to do amiss, bemoaning the wretched frailty of their state; yea often repenting and bitterly mourning for their actual transgressions: There hardly is any Saint, recorded in Scripture, without some blemish in his actions; which shews our weakness, and engageth us to be wary. They were indeed endowed with sufficient competencies of divine light and graces sutable to their private needs, or to the publick exigencies of their times, places, occasions and affairs; but not with the perfection and extream degrees thereof, requisite to preserve them from all miscarriage; so that we are not alwaies, or in all cases, to conform our actions to their examples: We must not learn to equivocate of *Abraham*, nor to circumvent of *Jacob*, nor to be cholerick of *Moses*, (so as in our excess of passion to break the Tables of the Divine Law) nor of *Eli* to be fondly affectionate, or indulgent to our relations, nor of *David* to utter uncharitable imprecations; nor to dissemble of St. *Peter*; nor of St. *Paul* to revile Magistrates: The use we are to make of many practices, of most eminently pious men, is not to be misguided by them into wrong paths; not by them to authorize, or excuse our presumptuous misdeeds; but to make us to admire, and to relye upon the Divine Mercy, which so graciously did overlook and pardon their offences; to provoke us to an imitation of their repentance; to render us watchful in shunning those rocks, upon which, persons, so skilful in the conduct of their lives, have dashed; to engage us to humility, by considering so manifest arguments of our frailty, and our being obnoxious to greater and more frequent miscarriages.

It was ill said of *Seneca*: *Catoni virtutes objecta est, & facilius efficit, quisquis objecerit hoc crimen, honestum, quam turpem Catonem.*

But as to our Saviour's example, the case is quite different; for though he did Miracles as God, he commanded as *Christ*; he did many heroical things in discharge of his office, *&c.* in which things, we cannot, or may

may not imitate him; yet whatever in his life was in its own nature imitable by us, which did not exceed our natural powers, nor disagree with our condition and quality; whatever he as Man, in a private capacity, as subject to the divine Law, with regard thereto performed, we may with all fredom, confidence and security imitate; nor can so doing incur any danger of errour, or guilt; for we cannot, without great folly and impiety, suspect any fault, or imperfection, in his most pure, righteous and innocent life: He was *holy, harmless, undefiled, and separated from sinners*: He was *a lamb without blemish and without spot*; *He was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. He did no sin, nor was any guile found in his mouth. God gave him of his spirit not by measure*: these are the voices and elogies of the Sacred Oracles concerning him. The heavenly extraction, even of his humanity, derived no original contagion from our polluted stock, and rendred him free from the common incentives of evil concupiscence. The inseparable presence of the Divinity with him (*for God was with him*, as St. *Peter* expressed it) and the unrestrained effusion of the H. Spirit upon him did preserve him from all defilements of infectious conversation in this World; a clear evidence of divine light always shining in his Soul, directed him infallibly in the paths of truth and righteousness; No tempest of cross accidents without, nor any estuations of internal passion could discompose the steady calm and serenity of his mind; no allurement of worldly pleasure, nor temptation of profit could pervert his practice, or seduce his heart, being enflamed with most intense love of God, and entire charity to men: so that his example must needs be a perfect rule and sure direction to us. Which consideration cannot but yeild great encouragement and comfort in following him; freeing us from all anxious doubt, and suspicion of mistake in our spiritual progress; like the presence of a sure guide to the bewildred Traveller; like the appearance of a Star to the weather-beaten Mariner; like that miraculous Pillar of Fire, which safely conducted the wandring *Israelites* through the unknown and unfrequented Passages of a wild Desart. But farther,

Heb. 7. 26. 1 Pet. 1. 19. Heb. 4. 15. 1 Pet. 2. 22. Joh. 3. 34.

Act. 10. 38.

Secondly, The peculiar excellency of our Lord's example appears, in that he was, by the Divine Providence, to this very purpose designed, and sent into the World, as well by his practice as by his doctrine, to be the guide and master of holy life, and obedience to all men; and did accordingly propound to himself this end of his actions, that he might be imitated by his disciples. So he declareth himself, as to some considerable passages of his life, and thence, by reasonable inference, we may suppose the same of the rest, so far as they might be conducible to the same end; especially, since of some performances, no other, or no so probable accompt can be given, as that they were done for exemplarity: For why should he fast, who had no sins to be repented of, no rebellious flesh to be tamed, no intemperate desires to be mortifi'd, no coldness of devotion to be enlivened thereby? And why did he offer himself to be Baptized, who had no original stain to be cleansed of, no fault to be forgiven, no want of special grace to be conferr'd? Why, but by his exemplary fulfilling all righteousness, to teach us ready obedience to all Divine Institutions, and peaceable compliance with all laudable customs: So an ancient Writer wisely descanteth upon those practices of our Saviour: *He was* (saith

Διὰ τοῦτο καὶ αὐτὸς ἐνήστευσεν ἵνα αὐτὸς πάντης λύσεως, ἀλλ' ἡμᾶς παιδεύων. Chrys. *Tom.* 2. p. 81.

(ſaith that Writer) *Baptized, and faſted, not becauſe he had need of any cleanſing, or faſting, who in nature was pure and holy; but that he might atteſt to the truth of St.* John, *and might exhibit a pattern to us.* What induc'd him to condeſcend to ſuch a misbeſeeming employment to appearance, as the waſhing of his diſciples feet, he doth himſelf tell us: *If I then* (ſaith he) *your Lord and Maſter have waſhed your feet, ye ought alſo to waſh one anothers feet; for I have given you an example, that ye ſhould do as I have done unto you.* This was his profeſſed ſcope and drift, in that admirable deportment of his, to teach us humility, charity and condeſcenſion toward the meaneſt of our Brethren. What did thoſe exuberant inſtances of charity, practiſed by him, import? this eſpecially, that we ſhould imitate them; hither he drives them; *This* (ſaith he) *is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you.* Why was he, in his diſpoſition, ſo meek and gentle, in his converſation ſo humble and lowly? to this purpoſe, that we might of him learn thoſe excellent qualities: *Learn of me* (ſaith he) *for I am meek and lowly in heart.* And, St. *Peter* ſaith, *That Chriſt ſuffered for us, leaving us an example, that we ſhould follow his ſteps*; ſignifying, that he deſigned his patience to be exemplary to us. If then our Saviour, in his humility, his charity, his meekneſs, his patience, intended his life to be exemplary, and expreſly propounded it as ſuch; then certainly, in his devotion, his ſelf-denial, his juſtice, in all other vertues he had the ſame intention; and what he intended, God deſigned to be; and what God deſigned to be, was doubtleſs eminently conducible to the end deſigned; and therefore our Saviour's life was moſt exemplary. Other Saints indeed were of very exemplary converſation, but either proved to be ſo, according to ordinary courſe of providence, without any peculiar deſignation thereto (their free choice conſpiring, with God's Grace, in producing good works ſhining before men) or at moſt, by a reſtrained determination to ſome particular time, place or people; as *Moſes* was choſen and appointed to conduct the *Iſraelites*; David *was taken from the ſheepfold, and following the ewes great with young, to feed* Jacob *God's people, and* Iſrael *his inheritance*; *Jeremy* was ſanctified from his birth, and ordained to be a Prophet of the Nations in his times, and St. *Paul* was ſeparated from the womb to be a Preacher of the Chriſtian Faith: theſe, and ſuch like eminent perſons, Almighty God, in his goodneſs, was pleaſed to raiſe up, to be, in their generations, as it were partial and temporary Saviours, as by declaring his will, and revealing his truth to men, ſo by guiding them with a remarkable example; theſe *burning and ſhining* * *Lamps* (as St. *John* the *Baptiſt* is called) were indeed, like lamps ſet up in ſome particular families, with a competent luſtre, to diſpel the preſent darkneſs, ſhining within their definite ſphere, and for a determinate time; but our Saviour, like the Sun, fixed in a higher orb, was ordained with a perpetual and unconfined ſplendour to illuminate the Univerſe; to cauſe a general and everlaſting day of healthful and comfortable knowledge over the face of the whole earth, He was *that true light, which enlighteneth every man coming into the world*; *He was prepared before the face of all people, to be a light to lighten the Nations* (not *Iſrael* onely, but the *Nations* indefinitely, or all Nations.) He was ordained, not Commander of a ſingle Regiment, or Party, but Captain-General of all Mankind, to conduct all thoſe who were diſpoſed to follow him, by a victorious obedience, into that triumphant ſtate of everlaſting joy and happineſs. His example doth belong unto us all without exception,

Ἐβαπτίσθη καὶ ἐνήστευσεν οὐκ αὐτὸς ἀπερυπώτους ἢ νηστείας χρείαν ἔχων ἢ καθάρσιον ὅτῳ φύσει καθαρὸς καὶ ἅγιος, ἀλλ' ἵνα Ἰωάννῃ ἀλήθειαν πιστώσηται καὶ ἡμῖν ὑπογραμμὸν παραδείξῃ.

John 15. 12.

Mat. 11. 29

1 Pet. 2. 21

Acts 7. 35. Pſal. 106. 23. Pſal. 78. 70.

Jer 1. 5.

Joh. 5. 35.

* Λύχνος καιόμενος καὶ φαίνων.

John 1. 9. Luc. 2. 31, 32.

Heb. 2. 10.

exception, by divine ordination; for *we*, all of us, *were* (to uſe St. *Paul*'s
Rom. 8. 29. expreſſion) *predeſtinated to be conformed to the image of God's Son*; *that he might be the firſt-born among many brethren.* So it was, and ſo it became the infinite goodneſs, and philanthropy of God, to beſtow upon mankind one perfectly good example, inviting to all vertue, and ſo fit to countervail all thoſe many bad ones, wherewith we converſe, enticing to vice; to ſet forth, among ſo many imperfect ones, one accompliſhed piece of his heavenly workmanſhip, able to attract the eyes, and raviſh the hearts of all men with admiration of its excellent worth and beauty; to offer
Jon. 5. 19. Ἃ γὰρ ἂν ἐκεῖνος ποιῇ, ταῦτα καὶ ὁ υἱὸς ὁμοίως ποιεῖ. to our view ſome diſcernible repreſentation of his inviſible perfections; that ſo we might better be induced and inured to apprehend, love, reverence and imitate himſelf, by contemplation of that moſt exquiſite image of him; to give an evident proof, that the higheſt vertue is not unpracticable, that humane nature, by aid and guidance of the Divine Spirit, may arrive to the ſublimeſt pitch of perfection in goodneſs; in fine, to expoſe ſuch a common, ſweet and lovely pattern, as we with aſſurance, joy and comfort may follow.

Thirdly, Our Saviours example is eſpecially influential upon practice, in that it was, by an admirable temperament, more accommodated for imitation than any others have been. That the perfect copy of his moſt holy life ſeems more eaſie to be tranſcribed, than the ruder draughts of other holy Men; for though it were written with an incomparable fairneſs, delicacy and evenneſs; not ſlurred with any foul blot, nor any where declining from exact ſtreightneſs; yet were the lineaments thereof exceeding plain and ſimple; not by any gaudy flouriſhes, or impertinent intrigues rendred difficult, to ſtudious imitation; ſo that even women and children, the weakeſt and meaneſt ſort of people, as well as the moſt wiſe and ingenious, might eaſily perceive its deſign, and with good ſucceſs write after it. His was a gentle and ſteady light, bright indeed, but not dazling the eye; warm, but not ſcorching the face of the moſt intent beholder; No affected ſingularities, no ſupercilious moroſities, no frivolous oſtentations of ſeemingly high, but really fruitleſs performances; nothing that might deter a timorous, diſcourage a weak, or offend a ſcrupulous diſciple, is obſervable in his practice: but on the contrary, his converſation was full of lowlineſs and condeſcenſion, of meekneſs and ſweetneſs, of openneſs and candid ſimplicity; apt to envite and allure all men to approach toward it, and with ſatisfaction to enjoy it. He did not ſeclude himſelf into the conſtant retirements of a Cloiſter, nor into the farther receſſes of a Wilderneſs (as ſome others have done) but converſed freely and indifferently with all ſorts of men, even the moſt contemptible and odious ſort of men, *Publicans* and *Sinners*; like the Sun, with an impartial bounty, liberally imparting his pleaſant light and comfortable warmth to all. He uſed no uncouth auſterities in habit, or diet, but complied, in his garb, with ordinary uſage, and ſuſtained his life with ſuch food as caſual opportunity did offer; ſo that his indifferency, in that kind, yeilded matter of obloquy againſt him from the fond admirers of a humorous preciſeneſs. His devotions, (though exceedingly ſprightful and fervent) were not uſually extended to a tedious and exhauſting durance, nor ſtrained into ecſtatical tranſports, charming the natural ſenſes, and overpowering the reaſon; but calm, ſteady and regular, ſuch as perſons of honeſt intention and hearty deſire (though not endued with high fancy, or ſtirring paſſion) might readily imitate. His zeal was not violent

lent or impetuous, except upon very great reaſon, and extraordinary occaſion, when the honour of God, or good of Men, was much concerned. He was not rigorous in the obſervance of traditional rites and cuſtoms, (ſuch as were needleſly burthenſome, or which contained in them more of formal ſhew, than of real fruit) yet behaved himſelf orderly and peaceably, giving due reſpect to the leaſt inſtitution of God, and complying with the innocent cuſtoms of men; thereby pointing out unto us the middle way between peeviſh ſuperſtition and boiſterous faction; which as always the moſt honeſt, ſo commonly is the moſt ſafe and pleaſant way to walk in. He delighted not to diſcourſe of ſublime miſteries (although his deep wiſdom comprehended all) nor of ſubtile ſpeculations and intricate queſtions, ſuch as might amuſe and perplex, rather than inſtruct and profit his Auditours; but uſually did feed his Auditours with the moſt common and uſeful truths, and that in the moſt familiar and intelligible language; not diſdaining the uſe of vulgar ſayings, and trivial proverbs, when they beſt ſerved to inſinuate his wholeſome meaning into their minds. His whole life was ſpent in exerciſe of the moſt eaſie and pleaſant, yet moſt neceſſary and ſubſtantial duties; obedience to God, charity, meekneſs, humility, patience, and the like; the which, that he might practiſe with the greateſt latitude, and with moſt advantage for general imitation, he did not addict himſelf to any particular way of life, but diſentangled himſelf from all worldly care and buſineſs; chuſing to appear in the moſt free, though very mean condition; that he might indifferently inſtruct, by his example, perſons of all callings, degrees and capacities; eſpecially the moſt, that is the poor; and might have opportunity, in the face of the world, to practiſe the moſt difficult of neceſſary duties; lowlineſs, contentedneſs, abſtinence from pleaſure, contempt of the world, ſufferance of injuries and reproaches. Thus ſuited and tempered by Divine Wiſdom was the life of our bleſſed Saviour, that all ſorts of men might be in an equal capacityto follow him, that none might be offended, affrighted, or diſcouraged, but that all might be pleaſed, delighted, enamoured with the homely Majeſty, and plain beauty thereof: And in effect ſo it happened, that ordinary people (the weakeſt, but ſincereſt, and unprejudic'd ſort of men) were greatly taken with, moſt admired and applauded his deportment; many of them readily embracing his doctrine, and devoting themſelves to his diſcipline; while onely the proud, envious, covetous and ambitious *Scribes* and *Lawyers* rejected his excellent doctrine, ſcorned the heavenly ſimplicity, and holy integrity of his life.

Fourthly, The tranſcendent excellency of our Lords example appeareth, in that it is attended with the greateſt obligations (of gratitude and ingenuity, of juſtice, of intereſt, of duty) mightily engaging us to follow it. For 'tis not the example of an ordinary, or inconſiderable perſon, of a ſtranger, of one indifferent, or unrelated to us; but of a glorious Prince, of heavenly extraction; (the firſt-born Son of the Almighty God, ſole heir of eternal Majeſty) of our Lord and Maſter, to whom we are for ever bound, by indiſpenſable bands of duty and obedience; of our great Captain, who hath undertaken to ſubdue our enemies, and hath obliged us to follow his conduct, in a holy warfare, againſt them, by moſt ſolemn ſacraments and vows; of our beſt friend, from whom we have received the greateſt favours and benefits imaginable; of our moſt gracious Saviour, who, for our ſake, hath voluntarily ſuſtained moſt bitter

pains, and ſhameful contumelies; having ſacrificed his deareſt heart-blood to redeem us from intolerable ſlaveries, and from extremities of horrible miſery; of him, to whom, in all reſpects, we do owe the higheſt reſpect, love and obſervance that can be: Now it is the nature and property both of reſpect and love (ſuch as upon ſo many grounds we owe to him) to beget in the perſon reſpecting and loving, an endeavour (anſwerable to the degrees of thoſe diſpoſitions) of conforming to, and reſembling the qualities and manners of the perſon reſpected, or beloved. We ſee how readily Children do comply with the cuſtoms of their Parents and Tutours; Servants of their Maſters and Patrons; Subjects of their Princes and Governours, with a ſtudious earneſtneſs compoſing themſelves to expreſs in their carriage, not onely their good or their indifferent faſhions and manners, but even their moſt palpable deformities and vices; inſomuch, that a whole family, a city, a nation may be debauch'd from its ſobriety, or reform'd from its diſſoluteneſs, even inſtantly, by the example of one perſon, who, by his place, power and authority, challengeth extraordinary reverence from men: and much greater influence hath hearty love to transform our manners into an agreement with the manners of him we love: *What a Man loves, that he imitateth ſo much as lies in his power*, ſaith *Hierocles*, truly. For love being founded on a good eſteem, and a benevolent inclination thence reſulting, engageth the affectionate perſon to admire the qualities of him he affecteth, to obſerve his deportments, to make the moſt advantageous conſtruction of what he doeth; to fancy he doeth all things with beſt reaſon and diſcretion; to deem therefore, that all his actions deſerve and require imitation: hence doth love either find, or ſoon produce a competent ſimilitude in the parties, (a ſimilitude of mind, of will, of inclination and affection; an *Eadem velle & nolle*:) It doth forcibly attract as to a vicinity of place and converſe, ſo to an agreement of affections and actions; it uniteth the moſt diſtant, it reconcileth the moſt oppoſite, it turneth the moſt diſcordant natures into a ſweet conſent, and harmony of diſpoſition and demeanour. We then having the greateſt reaſon both to honour and love our Saviour, ſurely his example being duly ſtudied and conſidered by us, muſt needs obtain a ſuperlative influence upon our practice, and be very powerful to conform, and aſſimilate it to his

Ὁ γὰρ ἀγαπᾷ τις, ϰ) μιμεῖται ὅσον δύνται. Hier.

Theſe conſiderations may ſuffice, to ſhew the peculiar excellency of our Saviour's example in vertue, and efficacy upon our practice; the ſame more abundantly might be deduc'd from a ſurvey of the moſt conſiderable particulars, in which we may and ought to imitate him. But the time will not ſuffer us to launch forth into ſo vaſt a ſea of diſcourſe. I ſhall onely therefore, from the premiſſes, exhort, That if any earneſt deſire of happineſs, any high eſteem of vertue, any true affection to genuine ſanctity do lodge in our breaſts, we ſhould apply this moſt excellent means of attaining them; the ſtudy and endeavour of imitating the life of our Lord: If we have in us any truth and ſincerity, and do not vainly prevaricate in our profeſſion of being *Chriſt*'s diſciples, and votaries of that moſt Holy Inſtitution, let us manifeſt it by a real conformity to the practice of him who is our Maſter, and authour of our faith; If we have in us any wiſdom, or ſober conſideration of things, let us employ it in following the ſteps of that infallible guide, deſigned by heaven to lead us in the ſtreight, even and pleaſant ways of righteouſneſs, unto the poſſeſſion of everlaſting bliſs: If we do verily like, and approve

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the practice of *Chriſt*, and are affected with the innocent, ſweet and lovely comelineſs thereof, let us declare ſuch our mind by a ſedulous care to reſemble it. If we bear any honour and reverence, any love and affection to *Chriſt*; if we are at all ſenſible of our relations, our manifold obligations, our duties to our great Lord, our beſt friend, our moſt gracious Redeemer; let us teſtify it by a zealous care to become like to him: Let a lively image of his moſt righteous and innocent, moſt holy and pious, moſt pure and ſpotleſs life be ever preſent to our fancies; ſo, as to inform our Judgments, to excite our affections, to quicken our endeavours, to regulate our purpoſes, to correct our miſtakes, to direct, amend and ſanctify our whole lives. Let us, with inceſſant diligence of ſtudy, meditate upon the beſt of hiſtories, wherein the tenour of his divine practice is repreſented to us; revolving frequently in our thoughts all the moſt conſiderable paſſages thereof, entertaining them with devout paſſions, impreſſing them on our memories, and ſtriving to expreſs them in our converſations; Let us endeavour continually to walk in the ſteps of our Lord, and *to follow the Lamb whitherſoever he goeth*; which that we may be able to do, do thou, O Bleſſed Redeemer, draw us; draw us by the cords of thy love; draw us by the ſenſe of thy goodneſs; draw us by the incomparable worth and excellency of thy perſon; draw us by the unſpotted purity and beauty of thy example; draw us by the merit of thy precious death, and by the power of thy Holy Spirit; *Draw us*, good Lord, *and we ſhall run after thee.* Amen.

Almighty God, who haſt given thine onely Son, to be unto us, both a ſacrifice for ſin, and alſo an enſample of godly life; give us grace, that we may always moſt thankfully receive that his ineſtimable benefit; and alſo daily endeavour our ſelves to follow the bleſſed ſteps of his moſt holy life, through the ſame Jeſus Chriſt *our Lord.* Amen. Coll. after Eaſter, 2.

SERMON IV.

Of Submiſſion to the Divine Will.

LUKE 22. 42.

Neverthleſs let not my will, but thine be done. Matt. 26. 39.

THE great controverſie, managed with ſuch earneſtneſs and obſtinacy between God and Man, is this, whoſe will ſhall take place, his or ours: Almighty God, by whoſe conſtant protection and great mercy we ſubſiſt, doth claim to himſelf the authority of regulating our practice, and diſpoſing our fortunes; but we

affect to be our own Maſters and Carvers; not willingly admitting any Law, not patiently brooking any Condition, which doth not ſort with our fancy and pleaſure: to make good his right, God bendeth all his forces, and applieth all proper means both of ſweetneſs and ſeverity (perſwading us by arguments, ſoliciting us by entreaties, alluring us by fair promiſes, ſcaring us by fierce menaces, indulging ample benefits to us, inflicting ſore corrections on us, working in us and upon us by ſecret influences of grace, by viſible diſpenſations of providence) yet ſo it is, that commonly nothing doth avail, our will oppoſing it ſelf with invincible reſolution and ſtiffneſs.

Here indeed the buſineſs pincheth; herein as the chief worth, ſo the main difficulty of religious practice conſiſteth, in bending *that iron ſinew*; in bringing our proud hearts to ſtoop, and our ſturdy humours to buckle, ſo as to ſurrender and reſign our wills to the juſt, the wiſe, the gracious will of our God, preſcribing our duty, and aſſigning our lot unto us. We may accuſe our nature, but it is our pleaſure; we may pretend weakneſs, but it is wilfulneſs, which is the guilty cauſe of our miſdemeanours; for by God's help (which doth alwaies prevent our needs, and is never wanting to thoſe who ſeriouſly deſire it) we may be as good as we pleaſe, if we can pleaſe to be good; there is nothing within us that can reſiſt, if our wills do yeild themſelves up to duty: to conquer our reaſon is not hard; for what reaſon of man can withſtand the infinite cogency of thoſe motives, which induce to obedience? What can be more eaſie, than by a thouſand arguments, clear as day, to convince any man, that to croſs God's will is the greateſt abſurdity in the world, and that there is no madneſs comparable thereto? Nor is it difficult, if we reſolve upon it, to govern any other part or power of our nature; for what cannot we doe, if we are willing? what inclination cannot we check, what appetite cannot we reſtrain, what paſſion cannot we quell or moderate; what faculty of our ſoul, or member of our body is not obſequious to our will? Even half the reſolution with which we purſue vanity and ſin, would ſerve to engage us in the ways of wiſdom and vertue.

Chryſ. *Tom.* 6. *Or.* 12. *in* 1 Cor. *Or.* 17. *Tom.* 5. *Or.* 28, 43.

Quodcunque ſibi imperavit animus obtinuit. Sen. *de Ira.* 2. 12.

Wherefore in overcoming our will the ſtreſs lieth; this is that impregnable fortreſs, which everlaſtingly doth hold out againſt all the batteries of reaſon and of grace; which no force of perſwaſion, no allurement of favour, no diſcouragement of terrour can reduce: this puny, this impotent thing it is, which grappleth with Omnipotency, and often in a manner baffleth it: And no wonder; for that God doth not intend to overpower our will, or to make any violent impreſſion on it, but onely to *draw it* (as it is in the *Prophet*) *with the cords of a man*, or by rational inducements to win its conſent and compliance; our ſervice is not ſo conſiderable to him, that he ſhould extort it from us; nor doth he value our happineſs at ſo low a rate, as to obtrude it on us. His victory indeed were no true victory over us, if he ſhould gain it by main force, or without the concurrence of our will; our works not being our works, if they do not iſſue from our will; and our will not being our will, if it be not free; to compel it were to deſtroy it, together with all the worth of our vertue and obedience: wherefore the Almighty doth ſuffer himſelf to be withſtood, and beareth repulſes from us; nor commonly doth he maſter our will otherwiſe, than by its own ſpontaneous converſion and ſubmiſſion to him: if ever we be conquer'd, as we ſhall ſhare in the benefit, and wear a crown; ſo we muſt join in the combat,

Hoſ. 11. 4.

Ἐπεὶ τοῦτο καὶ αὐτὸ διαζάλλει τὸ ἀγαθὸν εἰ μὴ τοιαύτη αὐτῶν ἔσχεν ἡ φύσις, ἃς καὶ ἐκόντας προσδέχεσθαι, καὶ χάριν ἔχειν πολλήν. Chryſ. in 1 Cor. Orat. 2.

bat, and partake of the victory, by ſubduing our ſelves: *we muſt take the yoke upon us*; for God is onely ſerved by volunteers; he ſummoneth us by his Word, he attracteth us by his Grace, but we muſt *freely come unto him.*

Our will indeed of all things is moſt our own; the onely gift, the moſt proper ſacrifice we have to offer; which therefore God doth chiefly deſire, doth moſt highly prize, doth moſt kindly accept from us. Seeing then our duty chiefly moveth on this hinge, the free ſubmiſſion and reſignation of our will to the will of God; it is this practice, which our Lord (who came to guide us in the way to happineſs, not onely as a teacher by his word and excellent doctrine, but as a leader, by his actions and perfect example) did eſpecially ſet before us; as in the conſtant tenour of his life, ſo particularly in that great exigency which occaſioned theſe words, wherein, renouncing and deprecating his own will, he did expreſs an entire ſubmiſſion to God's will, a hearty complacence therein, and a ſerious deſire that it might take place.

For the fuller underſtanding of which caſe, we may conſider, that our Lord, as partaker of our nature, and, *in all things* (bating ſin) *like unto us*, had a natural humane will, attended with ſenſes, appetites and affections, apt from objects incident to receive congruous impreſſions of pleaſure and pain; ſo that whatever is innocently grateful and pleaſant to us, that he reliſh'd with delight, and thence did incline to embrace; whatever is diſtaſtful and afflictive to us, that he reſented with grief, and thence was moved to eſchew; to this probably he was liable in a degree beyond our ordinary rate; for that in him nature was moſt perfect, his compleſtion very delicate, his temper exquiſitely ſound and fine; for ſo we find, that by how much any man's conſtitution is more ſound, by ſo much he hath a ſmarter guſt of what is agreeable or offenſive to nature: If perhaps ſometimes infirmity of body, or diſtemper of ſoul (a ſavage ferity, a ſtupid dulneſs, a fondneſs of conceit, or ſtiffneſs of humour, ſupported by wild opinions, or vain hopes) may keep men from being thus affected by ſenſible objects; yet in him pure nature did work vigorouſly, with a clear apprehenſion and lively ſenſe, according to the deſign of our maker, when into our conſtitution he did implant thoſe paſſive faculties, diſpoſing objects to affect them ſo and ſo, for our need and advantage; if this be deemed weakneſs, it is a weakneſs connexed with our nature, which he therewith did take, and *with which* (as the *Apoſtle* ſaith) *he was encompaſſed.* Such a will our Lord had, and it was requiſite he ſhould have it; that he thence might be qualified to diſcharge the principal inſtances of obedience, for procuring God's favour to us, and for ſetting an exact pattern before us; for God impoſing on him duties to perform, and diſpenſing accidents to endure, very croſs to that natural will, in his compliance and acquieſcence thereto, his obedience was throughly tried; his vertue did ſhine moſt brightly; therefore (as the *Apoſtle* ſaith) *he was in all points tempted*; thence, as to meritorious capacity, and exemplary influence, *he was perfected through ſuffering.*

Ἐπεὶ γὰρ αὐτὸς πεπείρασται ἐν ᾧ πέπονθεν. Heb. 5. 2.

Heb. 4. 15. 2. 10, 18.

Hence was the whole courſe of his life and converſation among men, ſo deſigned, ſo modelled, as to be one continual exerciſe of thwarting that humane will, and cloſing with the divine pleaſure: it was predicted of him, *Loe I come to do thy will O God*; and of himſelf he affirmed, *I came down from Heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that ſent me*; whereas therefore ſuch a practice is little ſeen in atchieving eaſie matters, or in admitting pleaſant occurrences; it was ordered for him, that he

Heb. 10. 7. Pſa. 40. 7. Joh. 6. 38. 5. 30. 4. 34.

he ſhould encounter the rougheſt difficulties, and be engaged in circumſtances, moſt harſh to natural apprehenſion and appetite; ſo that if we trace the footſteps of his life from the ſordid manger to the bloody croſs, we can hardly mark any thing to have befallen him apt to ſatisfy the will of nature. Nature liketh reſpect, and loatheth contempt; therefore was he born of mean parentage, and in a moſt homely condition; therefore did he live in no garb, did aſſume no office, did exerciſe no power, did meddle in no affairs, which procure to men conſideration and regard; therefore an impoſtour, a blaſphemer, a ſorcerer, a looſe companion, a ſeditious incendiary were the titles of honour, and the elogies of praiſe conferred on him; therefore was he expoſed to the laſh of every ſlanderous, every ſcurrilous, every petulant and ungoverned tongue.

Nature doth affect the good opinion, and good will of men, eſpecially when due in grateful return for great courteſie and beneficence; nor doth any thing more grate thereon, than abuſe of kindneſs; therefore, could he (the world's great friend and benefactour) ſay, *the world hateth me*; therefore were thoſe, whom he, with ſo much charity and bounty had inſtructed, had fed, had cured of diſeaſes (both corporal and ſpiritual) ſo ready to clamour, and commit outrage upon him; therefore could he thus expoſtulate, *Many good works have I ſhewed you from my father, for which of thoſe works do ye ſtone me*? therefore did his kindred ſlight him, therefore did his diſciples abandon him, therefore did the grand traitor iſſue from his own boſome; therefore did that whole Nation, which he chiefly ſought and laboured to ſave, conſpire to perſecute him, with moſt rancorous ſpite and cruel miſuſage.

Joh. 5. 18, 25.

Joh. 10. 31.

Joh. 13. 18.

Nature loveth plentiful accommodations, and abhorreth to be pinched with any want; therefore was extream penury appointed to him; he had no revenue, no eſtate, no certain livelyhood, not *ſo much as a houſe where to lay his head*, or a piece of money to diſcharge the taxe for it; he owed his ordinary ſupport to alms, or voluntary beneficence; he was to ſeek his food from *a fig-tree on the way*; and ſometimes was beholden for it to the courteſie of Publicans; δι ἡμᾶς ἐπτώχευσε, *he was* (ſaith St *Paul*) *a beggar for us.*

Mat. 8. 20. 17. 25. 21. 19. Luc. 8. 3. 2 Cor. 8. 9.

Nature delighteth in eaſe, in quiet, in liberty; therefore did he ſpend his days in continual labour, in reſtleſs travel, in endleſs vagrancy, *going about and doing good*; ever haſtening thither, whither the needs of men did call, or their benefit envite; therefore did he *take on him the form of a ſervant*, and was among his own followers *as one that miniſtreth*; therefore he *pleaſed not himſelf*, but ſuited his demeanour to the ſtate and circumſtances of things, complied with the manners and faſhions, comported with the humours and infirmities of men.

Joh. 4. 16. Matt. 4. 23. 8. 35. Act. 10. 38. Phil. 2. 7. Luc. 22. 27. Marc. 6. 6. Matt. 21. 28.

Nature coveteth good ſucceſs to its deſign and undertakings, hardly brooking to be diſappointed and defeated in them: therefore was he put to water dry ſticks, and to waſh *Negros*; that is, to inſtruct a moſt dull and ſtupid, to reform a moſt perverſe and ſtubborn generation; therefore his ardent deſires, his ſolicitous cares, his painful endeavours for the good of men did obtain ſo little fruit; had indeed a contrary effect, rather aggravating their ſins than removing them, rather hardening than turning their hearts, rather plunging them deeper into perdition, than reſcuing them from it: therefore ſo much in vain did he, in numberleſs miraculous works, diſplay his power and goodneſs, convincing few, converting fewer by them; therefore although he taught with moſt powerful authority, with moſt charming gracefulneſs, with moſt convincing evi-

Luc. 4. 22, 32.

dence

dence, yet, *Who* (could he ſay) *hath believed our report*? though he moſt earneſtly did invite and allure men to him, offering the richeſt boons that heaven it ſelf could diſpenſe, yet, *Ye will not* (was he forced to ſay) *come unto me, that ye may be ſaved*; although with aſſiduous fervency of affection he ſtrove to reclaim them from courſes tending to their ruin, yet how he proſpered, ſad experience declareth, and we may learn from that doleful complaint, *How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, but ye would not*: οὐκ ἠθελήσατε, your will did not concur, your will did not ſubmit. Joh. 12. 38. Joh. 5. 40. Luc. 13. 34. 19. 42.

In fine, natural will ſeeketh pleaſure, and ſhunneth pain; But what pleaſure did he taſt; what inclination, what appetite, what ſenſe did he gratifie? How did he feaſt, or revel? How, but in tedious faſtings, in frequent hungers, by paſſing whole nights in prayer, and retirement for devotion upon the cold mountains? What ſports had he, what recreation did he take, but feeling inceſſant gripes of compaſſion, and wearieſome roving in queſt of the loſt ſheep? In what converſation could he divert himſelf, but among thoſe, whoſe doltiſh incapacity and forward humour, did wring from his patience thoſe words, *How long ſhall I be with you, how long ſhall I ſuffer you*? What Muſick did he hear? What but the ratlings of clamorous obloquy, and furious accuſations againſt him? to be deſperately maligned, to be inſolently mocked, to be ſtiled a King, and treated as a ſlave; to be ſpit on, to be buffetted, to be ſcourged, to be drenched with gall, to be crowned with thorns, to be nailed to a croſs; theſe were the delights which our Lord enjoyed, theſe the ſweet comforts of his life, and the notable proſperities of his fortune: ſuch a portion was allotted to him, the which he did accept from God's hand with all patient ſubmiſſion, with perfect contentedneſs, with exceeding alacrity, never repining at it, never complaining of it, never flinching from it, or fainting under it; but proceeding on in the performance of all his duty, and proſecution of his great deſigns, with undaunted courage, with unwearied induſtry, with undiſturbed tranquillity and ſatisfaction of mind. Marc. 1. 13, 35. Luc. 5. 16. Joh. 4. 6, 31. Luc. 6. 12. Matt. 14. 23. Matt. 18. 12. Matt. 17. 17.

Had indeed his condition and fortune been otherwiſe framed; had he come into the world qualified with a noble extraction; had he lived in a ſplendid equipage, had he enjoyed a plentiful eſtate and a fair reputation, had he been favoured and careſſed by men; had he found a current of proſperous ſucceſs, had ſafety, eaſe and pleaſure waited on him; Where had been the pious reſignation of his will; where the precious merit of his obedience; where the glorious luſtre of his example? how then had our frailty in him become victorious over all its enemies; how had he triumphed over the ſolicitations and allurements of the fleſh; over the frowns and flatteries of the world; over the malice and fury of hell; how then could he have ſo demonſtrated his immenſe charity toward us, or laid ſo mighty obligations upon us?

Such in general was the caſe, and ſuch the deportment of our Lord; but there was ſomewhat peculiar, and beyond all this occurring to him, which drew forth the words of our Text: God hath tempered for him a potion of all the moſt bitter and loathſome ingredients that could be; a drop whereof no man ever hath, or could indure to ſip; for he was not onely to undergo whatever load humane rage could impoſe, of ignominious diſgrace, and grievous pain; but to feel diſmal agonies of Spirit, and thoſe *unknown ſufferings*, which God alone could inflict, God onely could ſuſtain: *Behold, and ſee*, he might well ſay, *if there be any ſorrow like unto my ſorrow, which is done unto me; wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me* Δὶ ἀγνώστων σε παθημάτων ἐλύπησεν ἡμᾶς κύριε. Lit. Gr. Lam. 2. 12.

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in the day of his fierce anger? He was to labour with pangs of charity, and through his heart to be pierced with deepeſt commiſeration of our wretched caſe: he was to crouch under the burthen of all the ſins (the numberleſs moſt heinous ſins and abominations) ever committed by mankind: he was to paſs through the hotteſt furnace of divine vengeance, and by his blood to quench the wrath of Heaven flaming out againſt iniquity; he was to ſtand (as it were) before the mouth of Hell, belching fire and brimſtone on his face: his grief was to ſupply the defects of our remorſe, and his ſuffering in thoſe few moments to countervail the eternal torments due to us: He was to bear the hiding of God's face, and an eclipſe of that favourable aſpect, in which all bliſs doth reſide; a caſe which he that ſo perfectly underſtood, could not but infinitely reſent: theſe things with the cleareſt apprehenſion he ſaw coming on him; and no wonder that our nature ſtarted at ſo ghaſtly a ſight; or that humane inſtinct ſhould dictate that petition, *Father if thou wilt, let this cup paſs from me*; words implying his moſt real participation of our infirmity; words denoting the height of thoſe ſad evils which encompaſſed him with his lively and lowly reſentment of them; words informing us, how we ſhould entertain God's chaſtiſements, and whence we muſt ſeek relief of our preſſures (that we ſhould receive them, not with a ſcornful neglect or ſullen inſenſibility, but with a meek contrition of ſoul; that we ſhould entirely depend on God's pleaſure for ſupport under them, or a releaſement from them) words which in conjunction with thoſe following do ſhew how inſtantly we ſhould quaſh and over-rule any inſurrection of natural deſire againſt the command or providence of God. We muſt not take that prayer to ſignify any purpoſe in our Lord to ſhift off his paſſion, or any wavering in reſolution about it; for he could not any wiſe mean to undo that, which he knew done with God before the world's foundation; he would not unſettle that, which was by his own free undertaking, and irreverſible decree; He that ſo often with ſatisfaction did foretel this event, who with ſo *earneſt deſire* longed for its approach; who with that ſharpneſs of indignation did rebuke his friend offering to divert him from it; who did again repreſs St. *Peter*'s animoſity with that ſerious expoſtulation, *The cup which my Father hath given me, ſhall I not drink it*? who had adviſedly laid ſuch trains for its accompliſhment, would he decline it? Could that heart all burning with zeal for God and charity to men admit the leaſt thought or motion of averſeneſs from drinking that cup, which was the Sovereign medicine adminiſtred by divine wiſdom for the recovery of God's Creation? No; had he ſpake with ſuch intent, legions of Angels had flown to his reſcue; that word, which framed the worlds, which ſtilled the tempeſts, which ejected Devils, would immediately have ſcattered his enemies, and daſhed all their projects againſt him; wherefore thoſe words did not proceed from intention, but as from inſtinct, and for inſtruction; importing, that what our humane frailty was apt to ſuggeſt, that his divine vertue was more ready to ſmother; neither did he vent the former, but that he might expreſs the latter.

Ἐπιθυμίᾳ ἐπεθύμησα, Luc. 22. 15.

Joh. 18. 11.

Matt. 26. 53.

He did expreſs it in real effect; immediately with all readineſs addreſſing himſelf to receive that unſavoury potion; he reached out his hand for it, yeilding fair opportunity and advantages to his perſecutours; he lifted it up to his mouth, innocently provoking their envy and malice, he drank it off with a moſt ſteady calmneſs, and ſweet compoſure of mind, with the ſilence, the ſimplicity, the meekneſs of a lamb, carried to the ſlaughter; no fretful thought riſing up, no angry word breaking forth,

but,

but clear patience, enlivened with a warm charity, ſhining in all his behaviour, and thorough every circumſtance of his paſſion.

Such in his life, ſuch at his death was the practice of our Lord; in conformity whereto we alſo readily ſhould undertake whatever God propoſeth, we gladly ſhould accept whatever God offereth, we vigorouſly ſhould perform whatever God enjoyneth, we patiently ſhould undergo whatever God impoſeth or inflicteth how croſs ſoever any duty, any diſpenſation may prove to our carnal ſenſe or humour.

To do thus, the contemplation of this example may ſtrongly engage us, for if our Lord had not his will, can we in reaſon expect, can we in modeſty deſire to have ours? muſt we be cockered and pleaſed in every thing, when as he was treated ſo courſely, and croſſed in all things? can we grutch at any kind of ſervice, or ſufferance; can we think much (for our trial, our exerciſe, our correction) to bear a little want, a little diſgrace, a little pain, when the Son of God was put to diſcharge the hardeſt tasks, to endure the ſoreſt adverſities.

But farther to enforce theſe duties, be pleaſed to caſt a glance on two conſiderations. 1. What the will is to which. 2. Who the willer is to whom we muſt ſubmit.

1. What is the will of God? is it any thing unjuſt, unworthy, or diſhonourable, any thing incommodious or hurtful, any thing extremely difficult, or intolerably grievous that God requireth of us, to do or bear? No: he willeth nothing from us, or to us, which doth not beſt become us, and moſt behove us; which is not attended with ſafety, with eaſe, with the ſolideſt profit, the faireſt reputation, and the ſweeteſt pleaſure.

Two things he willeth, that we ſhould be good, and that we ſhould be happy; the firſt in order to the ſecond, for that vertue is the certain way, and a neceſſary qualification to felicity.

The will of God, ſaith St. *Paul*, *is our ſanctification*; what is that? what, but that the decaies of our frame, and the defacements of God's image within us ſhould be repaired; that the faculties of our ſoul ſhould be reſtored to their original integrity and vigour; that from moſt wretched ſlaveries we ſhould be tranſlated into a happy freedom, yea, into a glorious kingdom; that from deſpicable beggary and baſeneſs we ſhould be advanced to ſubſtantial Wealth, and ſublime dignity; that we ſhould be cleanſed from the fouleſt defilements, and decked with the goodlieſt ornaments; that we ſhould be cured of moſt loathſome diſeaſes, and ſetled in a firm health of ſoul; that we ſhould be delivered from thoſe brutiſh luſts, and thoſe deviliſh paſſions, which create in us a hell of darkneſs, of confuſion, of vexation; which diſhonour our nature, deform our ſoul, ruffle our mind, and wrack our conſcience; that we ſhould be endowed with thoſe worthy diſpoſitions and affections, which do conſtitute in our hearts a heaven of light, of order, of joy and peace; dignify our nature, beautify our ſoul, clarify and chear our mind; that we ſhould eſchew thoſe practices, which never go without a retinue of woful miſchiefs and ſorrows, embracing thoſe which alwaies yeild abundant fruits of convenience and comfort; that in ſhort, we ſhould become friends of God, fit to converſe with Angels, and capable of paradiſe. 1 Theſ. 4. 3.

God (ſaith St. *Paul* again) *willeth all men to be ſaved*; *he willeth not* (ſaith St. *Peter*) *that any man ſhould periſh*; He ſaith in himſelf, yea, he ſweareth it, *that he hath no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked ſhould turn from his way and live*: And what is this will, what, but that we ſhould obtain all the good whereof we are capable; that we ſhould be 1 Tim. 2. 7. 2 Pet. 3. 9. Ezek. 33. 11.

filled with joy, and crowned with glory; that we ſhould be fixed in an immoveable ſtate of happineſs, in the perpetual enjoyment of Gods favour, and in the light of his bliſsful preſence: that we ſhould be rid of all the evils, to which we are lyable; that we ſhould be releaſed from inextricable chains of guilt, from incurable ſtings of remorſe, from being irrecoverably engaged to paſs a diſconſolate eternity in utter darkneſs, and extream Woe? Such is God's Will; to ſuch purpoſes every command, every diſpenſation of God (how grim, how rough ſoever it may ſeem) doth tend: and do we refuſe to comply with that good Will; do we ſet againſt it a Will of our own, affecting things unworthy of us, things unprofitable to us, things prejudicial to our beſt intereſts; things utterly baneful to our ſouls? Do we reject the Will that would ſave us, and adhere to a Will that would ruine us; a fooliſh and a ſenſeleſs Will, which ſlighting the immenſe treaſures of Heaven, the unfading glories of God's Kingdom, the ineffable joys of eternity doth catch at ſpecious nothings, doth purſue miſchievous trifles; a ſhadow of baſe profit, a ſmoak of vain honour, a flaſh of ſordid pleaſure; which paſſeth away like *the mirth of fools*, or *the crackling of thorns*, leaving onely ſoot, black and bitter behind it.

Eccleſ. 7. 6.

But at leaſt e'er we do thus, let us conſider, whoſe Will it is, that requireth our compliance.

It is the Will of Him, whoſe Will did found the earth, and rear the Heaven; whoſe Will ſuſtaineth all things in their exiſtence and operation; whoſe Will is the great law of the World, vvhich univerſal nature in all its motions doth obſerve; vvhich reigneth in Heaven, the bleſſed Spirits adoring it, vvhich ſvvayeth in Hell it ſelf, the curſed Fiends trembling at it; And ſhall vve alone (vve pitiful Worms cravvling on earth) preſume to murmure, or dare to kick againſt it?

Pſal. 148. 5. Apoc. 4. 11.

It is the Will of our Maker, vvho together vvith all our other faculties did create and confer on us, the very povver of Willing: and ſhall vve turn the Work of his hands, the gift of his bounty againſt him?

It is the Will of our Preſerver, vvho together vvith all that vve are, or have continually doth uphold our very Will it ſelf; ſo that vvithout employing any poſitive force, merely by letting us fall out of his hand, he can ſend us and it back to nothing: and ſhall our Will claſh vvith that, on vvhich it ſo vvholly dependeth; vvithout vvhich it cannot ſubſiſt one moment, or move one ſtep forvvard in action?

It is the Will of our ſovereign Lord, vvho upon various indiſputable accounts hath a juſt right to govern us, and an abſolute povver to diſpoſe of us; ought vve not therefore to ſay vvith old *Eli*, *It is the Lord, let him do to me as it ſeems good to him*? Is it not extream iniquity, is it not monſtrous arrogance for us, in derogation to his Will, to pretend giving law, or picking a ſtation to our ſelves? Do we not manifeſtly incur high treaſon againſt the King of Heaven by ſo invading his office, uſurping his authority, ſnatching his ſcepter into our hands, and ſetting our Wills in his throne?

1 Sam. 3. 8.

It is the Will of our Judge, from whoſe mouth our doom muſt proceed, awarding life or death, Weal or Woe unto us; and what ſentence can we expect, what favour can we pretend to, if we preſumptuouſly ſhall offend, oppoſe that Will, which is the ſupream rule of juſtice, and ſole fountain of mercy?

It is the Will of our Redeemer, who hath bought us with an ineſtimable price, and with infinite pains hath reſcued us from miſerable captivity

tivity under moſt barbarous enemies, that obeying his Will we might command our own, and ſerving him we might enjoy perfect freedom; And ſhall we declining his call and conduct out of that unhappy ſtate bereave him of his purchaſe, fruſtrate his undertakings, and forfeit to our ſelves the benefit of ſo great redemption?

It is the Will of our beſt friend; who loveth us much better, than we do love our ſelves; who is concerned for our welfare, as his own deareſt intereſt, and greatly delighteth therein; who by innumerable experiments hath demonſtrated an exceſs of kindneſs to us; who in all his dealings with us purely doth aim at our good, never charging any duty on us, or diſpenſing any event to us, ſo much with intent to exerciſe his power over us, as to expreſs his goodneſs towards us; who never *doth afflict or grieve us* more againſt our Will, than againſt his own deſire; never indeed but when goodneſs it ſelf calleth for it, and even mercy doth urge thereto; to whom we are much obliged, that he vouchſafeth to govern and guide us, our ſervice being altogether unprofitable to him, his governance exceedingly beneficial to us: And doth not ſuch a Will deſerve regard, may it not demand compliance from us? to neglect or infringe it, what is it; is it not palpable folly, is it not foul diſingenuity, is it not deteſtable ingratitude? Lam. 3. 39.

So doth every relation of God recommend his Will to us; and each of his attributes doth no leſs: for,

It is the Will of him, who is moſt holy, or whoſe Will is eſſential rectitude: how then can we thwart it, without being ſtained with the guilt, and wounded with a ſenſe of great irregularity and iniquity?

It is the Will of him who is perfectly juſt; who therefore cannot but aſſert his own righteous Will, and avenge the violation thereof: is it then adviſeable to drive him to that point by wilful provocation; or to run upon the edge of neceſſary ſeverity?

It is the Will of him, who is infinitely wiſe; who therefore doth infallibly know what is beſt for us, what doth moſt befit our capacities and circumſtances; what in the final reſult will conduce to our greateſt advantage and comfort: ſhall we then prefer the dreams of our vain mind before the oracles of his Wiſdom; ſhall we forſaking the direction of his unerring Will follow the impulſe of our giddy humour?

It is the Will of him, who is immenſely good and benign; whoſe Will therefore can be no other than good Will to us; who can mean nothing thereby but to derive bounty and mercy on us: Can we then fail of doing well, if we put our ſelves entirely into his hands; are we not our own greateſt enemies, in withſtanding his gracious intentions?

It is finally the Will of him, who is uncontrollably powerful; whoſe Will therefore muſt prevail one way or other: either with our Will, or againſt it, either ſo as to bovv and ſatisfy us, or ſo as to break and plague us: for *My counſel* (ſaith he) *ſhall ſtand, and I will do all my pleaſure.* As to his diſpenſations, vve may fret, vve may vvail, vve may bark at them, but vve cannot alter or avoid them: ſooner may vve by our moans check the tides, or by our cries ſtop the Sun in his carriere, than divert the current of affairs, or change the ſtate of things eſtabliſhed by God's high decree; vvhat he layeth on, no hand can remove; vvhat he hath deſtined, no povver can reverſe; our anger therefore vvill be ineffectual, our impatience vvill have no other fruit, than to aggravate our guilt, and augment our grief. Iſa. 46. 11.

As to his commands, vve may *lift up our ſelves againſt them*, vve may fight Dan. 5. 23.

fight ſtoutly, vve may in a ſort prove Conquorers; but it vvill be a miſerable victory, the Trophies vvhereof ſhall be erected in Hell, and ſtand upon the ruines of our happineſs; for vvhile vve inſult over abuſed grace, we muſt fall under incenſed juſtice: If God cannot fairly procure his Will of us in way of due obedience, he will ſurely execute his Will upon us in way of righteous vengeance; if we do not ſurrender our VVills to the overtures of his goodneſs, we muſt ſubmit our backs to the ſtroaks of his anger: He muſt reign over us, if not as over loyal Subjects to our comfort, yet as over ſtubborn Rebels to our confuſion; for this in that caſe will be our doom, and the laſt words God will deſign to ſpend upon us,

Luc. 19. 27. *Thoſe mine enemies, which would not that I ſhould reign over them, bring them hither, and ſlay them before me.*

Heb. 13. 20. *Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jeſus, that great Shepherd of the ſheep, through the blood of the everlaſting Covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleaſing in his ſight, through Jeſus Chriſt; to whom be glory for ever and ever*: Amen.

SERMON V.

Of Contentment.

PHIL. 4. 11.

Ἐγὼ γὰρ ἔμαθον ἐν οἷς εἰμὶ αὐτάρκης εἶναι. *I have learned in whatever ſtate I am, therewith to be content.*

IN theſe words by the example of an eminent Saint is recommended to us the practice of an excellent duty, or vertue: a practice in it ſelf moſt worthy, very grateful to God, and immediately of great benefit to our ſelves; being indeed neceſſary towards the comfortable enjoyment of our lives: It is contentedneſs, the vertue, which of all other doth moſt render this VVorld acceptable, and conſtituteth a kind of temporal Heaven; which he that hath, is thereby *ipſo facto* in good meaſure happy, whatever other things he may ſeem to want; which he that wanteth, doth, however otherwiſe he be furniſhed, become miſerable, and carrieth a kind of Hell within him: it cannot therefore but well deſerve our beſt ſtudy about it, and care to get it; in imitation of St. *Paul*, who *had learned in whatever ſtate he was therein to be content.*

Τὸ δ' αὐτάρκες πάντων, ὁ μονόμυθον αἱρετὸν ποιεῖ τὸν βίον, καὶ μηδενὸς ἐνδεᾶ. Ariſt. *Eth.* I. 7.

In diſcourſing upon which words I ſhall conſider two particulars; firſt the vertue it ſelf (contentedneſs in every ſtate) the nature of which I ſhall endeavour to explain; then the way of attaining or producing it, implied by St. *Paul* in the words, *I have learned.*

I. For

I. For explication of the vertue: The word here expreſſing it is, αὐτάρκεια, which ſignifieth ſelf-ſufficiency, or having enough of ones ſelf; the which is not to be underſtood abſolutely, as if he took himſelf to be independent in nature, able to ſubſiſt of himſelf, not wanting any ſupport or comfort without himſelf (for this is the property and privilege of the great *El-ſhaddai*, who alone ſubſiſteth of himſelf, needing toward his being and felicity nothing without himſelf? this is repugnant to the nature of man, who is a creature eſſentially dependent for his being and ſubſiſtence, indigent of many things for his ſatisfaction and welfare) but relatively conſidering his preſent ſtate, the circumſtances wherein he was, and the capacities he had; which by Gods diſpoſal and providence were ſuch, that he could not want more, than he had in his poſſeſſion, or reach. He meant not to exclude God, and his providence; but rather ſuppoſed that as the ground and cauſe of his ſelf-ſufficiency; according as otherwhere he expreſſeth it: *Not as if we were ſufficient of our ſelves, but our ſufficiency is of God*: Nor did he intend to exclude the need of other creatures otherwiſe than as conſidered without his poſſeſſion, or beyond his power; But he meaneth onely, that he did not deſire or lack more than what God had ſupplyed him with; had put into his hand, or had ſet within his reach; that his will did ſuit to his ſtate, his deſire did not exceed his power.

Τὸ δ' ἀλλαμοῦν ἀπέχειν δεῖ πάντα ἃ θέλει πλησμονῆς τινι ἐοικέναι. ἃ δ' ἴδιος δεῖ φρονεῖναι. ἀδὲ λιμόν. Arr. 3. 24.

2 Cor. 3. 5.

This is the meaning of the word, vvhich the Apoſtle uſeth; but for the more full and clear underſtanding the vertue it ſelf, vve ſhall firſt conſider the object, about vvhich it is converſant, then the ſeveral acts, vvhich it requireth, or vvherein the exerciſe thereof conſiſteth.

1. The object of contentedneſs is the preſent ſtate of things vvhatever it be (vvhether proſperous or adverſe, of eminency or meanneſs, of abundance or ſcantneſs) vvherein by divine providence vve are ſet: τὰ ἐν οἷς ἐσμὲν, *the things in which we are*, that is our preſent condition, vvith all its circumſtances: ſo it may be generally ſuppoſed, conſidering that it is ordinary, and almoſt natural for men (vvho have not learned as St. *Paul* had done, or are not inſtructed, and exerciſed in the practice of this duty) to be diſſatisfied, and diſquieted in every ſtate; to be alvvaies in vvant of ſomething; to find defects in every fortune; to fancy they may be in better caſe, and to deſire it earneſtly: If we eſtimate things wiſely, rich men are more liable to diſcontent then poor men. It is obſervable, that proſperity is a peeviſh thing, and men of higheſt fortune are apt moſt eaſily to reſent the ſmalleſt things: a little neglect, a ſlight word, an unpleaſing look doth affect them more than reproaches, blows, wrongs, do thoſe of a mean condition.

Proſperity is a nice and ſqueamiſh thing, and it is hard to find any thing able to pleaſe men of a full and proſperous ſtate, which being uncapable of bettering in ſubſtantial things they can hardly find matter of ſolid delight. Whereas a poor eſtate is eaſily comforted by the acceſſion of many things which it wanteth: a good meal, a ſmall gift, a little gain, or good ſucceſs of his labour doth greatly pleaſe a poor man with a very ſolid pleaſure: but a rich man hath nothing to pleaſe him, but a new toy, a puff of applauſe, ſucceſs at a horſe-race, at bowls, at hunting; in ſome petty ſport and paſtime, which can yeild but a very thin and tranſitory ſatisfaction to any man not quite brutified and void of ſenſe: whence contentedneſs hath place, and is needful in every condition, be it in appearance never ſo proſperous, ſo plentiful, ſo pleaſant. *In the fulneſs of his ſufficiencies, he ſhall be in ſtraits.* Job 20. 22.

The

Chryſ. *Tom.* 7. *p.* 68. The formal object thereof may indeed ſeem to be a condition diſtaſtful to our ſenſe, or croſs to our fancy; an adverſe or ſtrait condition; a condition of Poverty, of diſgrace, of any great inconvenience or diſtreſs incident to us in this World; but ſince the moſt men are abſolutely in ſuch a condition, expoſed to ſo many wants and troubles; ſince many more are needy comparatively, wanting the conveniencies that others enjoy, and which themſelves affect; ſince there are few, who in right eſtimation are not indigent and poor, that is who do not deſire and fancy themſelves to want many things which they have not (for wealth conſiſteth not ſo much in the poſſeſſion of goods, as in apprehenſion of freedom from want, and in ſatisfaction of deſires) ſince care, trouble, diſappointment, ſatiety and diſcontent following them, do not onely haunt cottages, and ſtick to the loweſt ſort of people, but do even frequent palaces, and purſue men of higheſt rank; therefore any ſtate may be the object of contentedneſs; and the duty is of a very general concernment; Princes themſelves need to learn it; the leſſons teaching it, and the arguments perſwading it may as well ſuit the rich and noble, as the poor and the paiſant; ſo our *Apoſtle* himſelf doth intimate in the words immediately following our Text: *I know both how to be abaſed, and I know how to abound*; *Every where, and in all things I am inſtructed both to be full, and to be hungry: both to abound and to ſuffer need*; he had the art not onely to manage well both conditions, but to be ſatisfied in either.

Phil. 4. 12.

But ſeeing real adverſity, poverty and diſgrace have naturally the ſtrongeſt influence in diſturbing and diſordering our minds; that contentedneſs is plainly moſt needful in ſuch caſes, as the proper ſupport, or medicine of our mind in them; that other ſtates do need it onely as they, by fancy or infirmity, do ſymbolize or conſpire with theſe; therefore unto perſons in theſe ſtates we ſhall more explicitely apply our directions, and perſwaſions, as to the proper and primary ſubjects of contentedneſs; the which by analogy, or parity of reaſon may be extended to all others who by imaginary wants and diſtreſſes do create diſpleaſure to themſelves. So much for the object, or the ſubject, of the vertue.

2. The acts, wherein the practice thereof conſiſteth (which are neceſſary ingredients, or conſtant ſymptoms of it) belong either to the mind and underſtanding, or to the will and appetite, or to external demeanour and practice; being 1. right opinions and judgments of mind, 2. fit diſpoſitions and affections of heart, 3. outward good actions and behaviours, in regard to our condition and the events befalling us; the former being as the root and ſtock, the latter as the fruits and the flowers of the duty: unto which may be reduced the correſpondent negations, or abſence of bad judgments, affections and deportments in reſpect to the ſame objects.

(1.) As to our opinions and judgments of things contentedneſs requireth, that

1. We ſhould believe our condition whatever it be to be determined by God, and that all events befalling us, do proceed from him; at leaſt that he permitteth and ordereth them, according to his judgment and pleaſure: that ἔκ τοῦ θεοῦ πᾶς καὶ γλυκὺ χἀδύρεται, all (as the *Prophet* ſingeth) *both good and evil proceedeth out of the mouth of the moſt High*; that *affliction* (as *Job* ſaid) *cometh not forth of the duſt, neither doth trouble ſpring out of the ground*; as a thing ariſing ſpontaneouſly, or ſowed by the hand of ſome creature, but rather deſcendeth from him, who ſaith, *I form the light and create darkneſs*; *I make peace, and create evil*; *I the Lord do all theſe things*.

Soph. Aj. *Lor.* Lam. 3. 38. Amos 3. 6. 1 Kings 12. 15, 24. Iſ. 45. 7.

VVe are apt, when any thing falleth out unpleaſant to us, to exclaim againſt

againſt fortune, and to accuſe our ſtars, ; or to inveigh againſt the ſecond cauſes which immediately offend us, aſcribing all to their influence; which proceeding in us doth argue in us a *Heatheniſh* ignorance and infidelity, or at leaſt much inconſiderateneſs, and impotency of mind; that our judgment is blinded and clouded, or perverted and ſeduced by ill paſſions; for that in truth there is not in the world any occurrence meerly fortuitous, or fatal (all being guided and weilded by the powerful hand of the All-wiſe, and Almighty God) there is no creature which in its agency doth not depend upon God, as the inſtrument of his will, or ſubordinate thereto; wherefore upon every event we ſhould, raiſing our minds above all other cauſes, diſcern and acknowledge God's hand; as *David* did, when *Shimei* curſed him; *Let him* (ſaid the good King) *curſe becauſe the Lord hath ſaid unto him, Curſe David*; as *Job* did when he was rifled of his goods, *The Lord* (ſaid he) *gave, and the Lord hath taken away*; as our Saviour did, when in regard to the ſore hardſhips he was deſigned to undergo, he ſaid, *The Cup which my Father hath given me, ſhall I not drink.*

Atque Deus atque aſtra vocat crudelia mater.

2 Sam. 16. 10.

Job. 1. 21.

Joh. 18. 11.

2. Hence we ſhould always judge every thing which happeneth to be throughly good and fit, worthy (all things conſidered) to be appointed, or permitted by that Governour of things; not entertaining any harſh thoughts of God, as if he were not enough wiſe, juſt, or benign in ordering us to be afflicted or croſſed; but taking all occurrences to be well conſiſtent with all God's holy perfections and attributes.

Παραχωρήσωμεν τοίνυν παραχαλᾶ τῷ σοφῷ τῶν παίδων ἡμῶν ἐπιστήτῃ καὶ σιγήσωμεν τὰ οἰκονομούμενα· ὁπῇα γὰρ ἂν ᾖ καὶ δυσερῃ, καὶ λυπηρά, &c. Theod. *Ep.* 136.

VVe are apt to conceit, that the world is ill ordered, when we do not thrive and proſper therein; that every thing is irregular, which ſquareth not to the models of our fancies; that things had gone much better, if our deſigns had found ſucceſs; but theſe are vain and perverſe conceits; for that certainly is moſt good, which ſeemeth good to God; his will is a perfect ſtandard of right, and convenience, his eye never aimeth wrong, his hand never faileth to hit the mark of what is beſt; *All his paths are mercy and truth*; *He is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works*; So did King *Hezekiah* rightly judge, when upon denunciation of a ſad doom to his country and poſterity, he replied to the Prophet, *Good is the word of the Lord, which thou haſt ſpoken*; ſo even the *Pagan* Sage diſcerned, when he thus rebuked a malecontent; *You ſlave, do you forſooth deſire any thing, but what is beſt? and is not that onely beſt, which ſeemeth beſt to God?*

Placuit homini quicquid Deo placuit, Sen. *Ep.* 75.

Στέργειν χρὴ καὶ τὰ δόξαντα ἀρίστα σοφίᾳ πρυτανεύοντα, καὶ πάντα πάντως νομίζειν συμφέροντα. Theod. *Ep.* 15.

Οἶδε γὰρ ὡς συφὲς τὸ συμφέρον, καὶ ὡς ἀγαθὸς τοῦτο ἡμῖν πεπραμάτευται. *Id. Ep.* 18.

Pſal. 25. 10. 145. 17.

2 Kings 20. 19.

Τί δ' ἐκπολεῖ, ἄλλο γὰρ θέλεις, ἢ τὸ βέλτιστον; ἄλλο δὲ τί ἄμεινον, ἢ τὸ θεῷ δοκοῦν; Arr. 11. 7.

3. We ſhould even be ſatisfied in our mind that according to God's purpoſe all events do tend and conduce to our particular welfare; being not onely good to us as members of the world, and in order to more general ends, but ſerving towards our private benefit and advantage. We may be ready perhaps to confeſs, that whatever happeneth may be indeed juſt and fit in ſome diſtant, and occult reſpects, but hardly can we be induced to allow, that what we feel offenſive to our ſenſe or fancy, is really good for us, or was meant for our benefit; we cannot eaſily diſcern any thing of love or favour in ſuch matters: Thoſe ſort of *Aphoriſms*, in Holy *Scripture, Happy is the man, whom God correcteth*; *As many as I love, I rebuke and chaſten*; ſound ſtrangely, and are huge *Paradoxes* to us; ſuch is our blindneſs of mind, and dulneſs of apprehenſion: but God knoweth with

Job 5. 17. Jam. 1. 12. Rev. 3. 19. Prov. 3. 12.

with ſo exact a skilfulneſs to manage things, that every particular occurrence ſhall be advantageous to the perſon, whom it toucheth; and accordingly to each one he diſpenceth that which is moſt ſuitable to him; whence, as frequently it is neceſſary for our good that we ſhould be croſſed (for that indeed otherwiſe we ſhould often much harm, ſometimes we ſhould quite undoe our ſelves) ſo it alwaies, when God ſo ordereth it, is to be deemed moſt profitable and wholeſome for us: we are therefore in reaſon obliged to take the ſaddeſt accidents, and ſharpeſt afflictions, coming upon us by providence, to be no other than fatherly corrections, or friendly rebukes, deſigned to render us good and happy; as arguments therefore and inſtances of eſpecial good-will toward us; conceiving under every diſpenſation that we do as it were hear God ſpeaking to us, as he did to thoſe in the *Prophet*: *I know the thoughts, that I think toward you, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.*

Jer. 29. 11.

4. Hence we are to believe, that our preſent condition (whatever it be to carnal, or worldly ſenſe) is in right judgment, all things conſidered, the beſt; moſt proper, moſt deſirable for us; better than we, if it were at our diſcretion and choice ſhould put our ſelves into: for that God (*the Saviour of all men*, who *deſireth that no man ſhould periſh*; who *is good to all, and whoſe tender mercies are over all his works*; who exceedingly tendereth the welfare of his children and ſubjects) doth ever (here in this life, the time of merit and trial) with a moſt wiſe good-will deſign our beſt good; and by the moſt proper methods (ſuch as do beſt ſuit our circumſtances and capacities) doth aim to draw us unto happineſs; and accordingly doth aſſign a ſtation for us moſt befitting in order to that great end; we therefore ſhould think our ſelves well-placed, becauſe we are where God doth ſet us, that we have enough, becauſe we have what God allotteth us.

1 Tim. 2. 4.
Ezek. 33. 11.
2 Pet. 3. 9.
Pſa. 145. 9.

There are other more particular judgments, which contentedneſs involveth, or which are required toward it; ſuch as theſe; that nothing originally is due to us, but all cometh purely from divine favour and bounty; that all adverſities are juſtly, and deſervedly inflicted on us, as the due wages, or natural fruits of our ſins; that our happineſs dependeth not on any preſent enjoyments or poſſeſſions, but may well ſubſiſt without them; that a competency (or ſo much as ſufficeth to maintain our life without intolerable pain) ought to ſatisfie our deſires; but theſe, and the like judgments will come opportunely to be conſidered as motives to the practice of the duty.

(2.) From ſuch acts of our mind or intellective parts concerning things incident to us, ſhould proceed the following diſpoſitions of will and affection.

1. We ſhould entertain all occurrences, how grievous ſoever to us with entire ſubmiſſion, and reſignation of our will to the will of God; wholly acquieſcing in his good pleaſure; ſaying in our hearts after our *Lord*, *Let not my will, but thine be done*; with good *Eli*, *It is the Lord, let him do what ſeemeth him good*; with *David*, *Behold here I am, let him do to me as ſeemeth good to him*; even with *Socrates*, *If ſo it pleaſeth God, ſo let it be*; with *Epictetus*, *I always chiefly will that, which cometh to paſs; for I account that better which God willeth than what I will my ſelf; I will adhere as a miniſter and follower to him, I purſue, I affect, I ſimply will with him*: looking upon them as ſent from God we ſhould heartily bid them welcome, we ſhould kindly embrace them, we ſhould uſe them with

Luke 22. 42.
1 Sam. 3. 18.
2 Sam. 15. 26.

Εἰ ταύτῃ θεοῖς φίλον ταύτῃ γενέσθω. Ἀεὶ μᾶλλον θέλω τὸ γινόμενον· κρεῖττον γὰρ ἡγοῦμαι ὃ ὁ θεὸς θέλει, ἢ ἐγώ· προσκείσομαι διάκονος καὶ ἀκόλουθος ἐκείνῳ συνορμῶ· ὁρίζομαι, ἁπλῶς συνθέλω. Arr. 3. 7.

with all fair reſpect; ἀσπάζεσθαι τὰ συμβαίνοντα (*to* hug, or kindly to *embrace things incident*) φιλεῖν τὰ ἀποτιθέμενα (*to love things diſpenſed by providence*) are precepts, which even as dictated by natural reaſon *Philoſophers* do much inculcate. M. Anton. 3. 4. 2. 17. 10. 11. 12. 1.

This excludeth all rebellious inſurrection, and ſwellings of mind againſt providence, ſuch as argue that we diſlike Gods government; that were we able we ſhould ſtruggle with Gods will; that we gladly would ſhake off his yoke; all ſuch ill reſentment and repining at our lot, which maketh Gods hand grievous, and his yoke uneaſie to us; ſuch affections as the wiſe man toucheth, when he ſaith, *The fooliſhneſs of man perverteth his way, and his heart fretteth againſt the Lord.* Prov. 19. 3.

2. We ſhould bear all things with ſteady calmneſs and compoſedneſs of mind, ſuppreſſing, or quelling thoſe tumults, thoſe ſtorms, thoſe exceſſes of paſſion, which the ſenſe of things diſguſtful is apt to excite; ſuch as are immoderate grief, fierce anger, irkſome deſpair, and the like. No adverſity ſhould ſo ruffle our minds, as to defeat and pervert the uſe of our reaſon ſo as to hinder us from perceiving, or performing what becometh us, ſo as to ingage us into any irregular, or unſeemly behaviour. *Let no man be moved by theſe afflictions;* μηδένα σαίνεσθαι (*i. e.* ſeduci) Chryſ. 1 Theſſ. 3. 3.

3. We ſhould indeed bear the worſt events with an εὐθυμία, that is, with a ſweet and chearful diſpoſition of mind, ſo as not to be put out of humour; not to be dejected, or quite diſcouraged by them, not to fall into that *heavineſs*, which (as the *Wiſeman* ſaith) *maketh the heart of man to ſtoop*; but rather finding delight and complacence in them, as conſidering whence they come, whither they aim and tend: ſuch was the diſpoſition and demeanour of the *Apoſtles* and *primitive* good *Chriſtians* in the midſt of their moſt grievous adverſities and ſufferings; *they rejoiced*, &c. they did *take joyfully the ſpoiling of their goods*, they did *account it all joy, when they fell into divers tribulations*: they were ὡς λυπούμενοι, ἀεὶ δὲ χαίροντες, *as grieved but alwaies rejoicing*; their ſtate was grievous, but their heart was conſtantly chearful. Such a conſtant frame of mind we ſhould maintain, ſo continually prepared we ſhould be againſt all contingencies, that nothing ſhould happen amiſs to us, ſo as deeply to affect us, or to unſettle us in our humour; that every thing from Gods hand ſhould be acceptable; that no ſadneſs may ſeize on us, at leaſt that we do not indulge or cheriſh it; that in no wiſe we ſuffer any regret to quench that ſpiritual comfort and joy in God; which *becometh the upright* (as the *Pſalmiſt* ſaith) and which we are ſo often enjoined perpetually to maintain, as in all caſes, ſo particularly under afflictions and trials. We cannot indeed hardly be content, if we are not chearful; for it is hard to be altogether on the ſuffering and bearing hand, without any pleaſure: the mind can hardly ſtand in a poiſe; ſo as neither to ſorrow or joy: we cannot digeſt adverſity, if we do not reliſh it; we ſhall not ſubmit to it as his will, if we do not take it for an argument of his love: εὐδοκῶ, *I* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *have a liking or pleaſure in infirmities, in reproaches, in neceſſities, in perſecutions, in diſtreſſes for Chriſts ſake; for when I am weak then I am ſtrong.*

Ἡ καρδία λύπη θάνατον κατεργάζεται. 2 Cor. 7. 10.

Prov. 12. 22.

Εὐδοκῶ ἐν ἀσθενείαις, ἐν ὕβρεσι, ἐν ἀνάγκαις, ἐν στενοχωρίαις ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ. 2 Cor. 12. 10.

εἰς πᾶσαν ὑπομονὴν καὶ μακροθυμίαν μετὰ χαρᾶς. Col. 1. 11.

Act. 5. 41. Heb. 10. 34. Jam. 1. 2. 2 Cor. 6. 10.

Pſal. 33. 1. 97. 12. Phil. 4. 4. 3. 1. 2 Cor. 13. 11. 1 Pet. 4. 13.

2 Cor. 12. 10.

4. We ſhould with faith and hope relye and wait on God for the removal, or eaſement of our afflictions; or however we ſhould confide in him for grace, and ſtrength to ſupport them well: as our *Saviour* did, when he prayed, *Father, if thou be willing remove this Cup*; as they did in the *Prophet*, who ſaid, *In the way of thy judgments, O Lord, we have waited on thee*

Luke 22. 42. Iſa. 26. 8.

thee; according to that rule in the *Lamentations*; *It is good that a man should both hope, and wait quietly for the Salvation of the Lord*; and thoſe precepts in the *Pſalms*; *Reſt in the Lord and wait patiently for him*; *wait upon the Lord, be of good courage, and he ſhall ſtrengthen thine heart.*

33. 2. Lam. 3. 26. Pſal. 37. 7. 24. 17. Pſal. 40. 1. 33. 20. 62. 1. 25. 3. 69 6. 44. 19. 16. 8. Pſal. 42. 2.

We ſhould in any caſe be ready with the holy *Pſalmiſt* thus to interrogate, and ſuſtain our ſelves, *Why art thou caſt down, O my Soul, why art thou ſo diſquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I ſhall yet praiſe him, for the help of his countenance.*

Remembring, and conſidering, that (as we are expreſly taught in *Scripture*, and as all our Religion doth clearly ſuppoſe) *God knoweth to reſcue the Godly out of tribulation*, (he knoweth the proper ſeaſon, when it is fit to do it) that *he is faithful, and will not ſuffer us to be tempted above what we are able; but will with the temptation alſo make a way to eſcape, that we may be able to bear it*, reflecting, I ſay, on theſe certain points of Chriſtian Truth, we ſhould never *ſorrow as thoſe who are without hope*; we ſhould never deſpair of a good riddance from our adverſity, when it ſhall be ſeaſonable or beneficial for us; we ſhould always be aſſured of a comfortable ſupport under it, which is uſually better than deliverance from it; our minds ſhould never ſink into deſpondency, or diſconſolateneſs: that this is practicable in the worſt caſe, we have conſpicuous inſtances to aſſure us; it hath been the practice of moſt illuſtrious and excellent perſons, particularly of the holy *Apoſtles*; never was any condition, in outward reſpects and appearance, more forlorn and diſmal than was theirs; yet in no-wiſe bereaved them of hope, or courage; *We* (they could ſay) *are troubled on every ſide, yet not diſtreſſed; we are perplexed, but not in deſpair, perſecuted, but not forſaken, caſt down, but not deſtroyed.*

1 Theſ. 4. 13. Iſa. 40. 31. Mic. 7. 7. 2 Cor. 4. 8. 1 Cor. 4. 11.

5. We ſhould indeed not ſo much as faint, or languiſh in our minds upon any ſuch occaſion; no adverſity ſhould impair the forces of our reaſon or our ſpirit; ſhould enervate our courage, or ſlacken our induſtry; ſhould render us ſick, or weak in heart; for, *If* (ſaith the *Wiſeman*) *thou faint in the day of adverſity, thy ſtrength is ſmall*; ('tis the ſign of an infirm mind) and μὴ ἐκκακεῖν, *not to faulter* or decay, μὴ ἐκλύεσθαι, *not to be diſſolved* or disjointed *in our ſouls* (as the body is in ſcorbutick diſtempers) are rules preſcribed to us in ſuch caſes: we do then indeed need a firm and robuſt conſtitution of ſoul; we ſhould then bear up moſt reſolutely and ſtoutly: the encouragement of *Moſes* to the people, entring into battel may well be accommodated to us, in regard to our conflicts with adverſities; *Let not your hearts faint, fear not and do not tremble, neither be ye terrified becauſe of them.*

Prov. 24. 10. 2 Cor. 4. 16. Rev. 2. 3. 2 Theſſ. 3. 13. Gal. 6. 9. Heb. 12. 3. — *nunc animis opus eſt, nunc pectore firmo.* Deut. 20. 3.

6. We ſhould not be weary of our condition, or have irkſome longings for alteration; but with a quiet indifferency, and willingneſs of mind lie under it, during God's pleaſure; according to the *Wiſe-man*'s advice; *My ſon deſpiſe not the chaſtening of the Lord, neither be weary of his correction*; and that of the *Apoſtle*, enforced by our *Lord*'s example; *Conſider him, that endured ſuch contradiction of ſinners againſt himſelf, leſt ye be wearied and faint in your minds.* We ſhould not think God ſlow, or his time long and tedious, as if he were forgetful of us, or backward to ſuccour us: as the *Pſalmiſt* was enclined to do, when in the day of trouble he brake forth into theſe conceits and expreſſions; *Will the Lord caſt off for ever, and will he be favourable no more; is his mercy clean gone for ever, doth his promiſe fail for evermore*; *Hath God forgotten to be gracious; hath he in anger ſhut up his tender mercies?* thus he in a ſad mood was apt to think and ſpeak; but recollecting himſelf he perceived it was his errour, and confeſſed

Prov. 3. 11. Heb. 12. 3. Pſal. 77. 7, 10.

feſſed it was his fault thus to imagine, I *ſaid, it was mine infirmity*; and it will be ours likewiſe, if we entertain ſuch conceptions and reſentments: we ſhould with the ſame mind endure our preſent ſtate, as we do paſs through a hard winter, or a time of foul weather, taking it for ſeaſonable and fit, becauſe the wiſe Authour of nature hath ſo appointed and ordered it.

7. We ſhould by adverſe accidents be rendred lowly in our own eyes, and ſober in our conceits of our ſelves; meek and gentle, tender and pliable in our temper and frame of ſpirit; ſenſible of our unworthineſs and meanneſs, of our natural frailty, penury and miſery, of our actual offences and miſcarriages; deeply affected in regard to the awful majeſty and power, to the perfect holineſs, and ſtrict juſtice of God: they ſhould quell our haughty ſtomach, they ſhould ſupple our ſtiff wilfulneſs, they ſhould ſoften our hard hearts, they ſhould mitigate our peeviſh humours; to effect theſe things is uſually the deſign of ſuch accidents, and it is ever the beſt fruit of them; this is that, which St. *Peter* adviſeth to, when he ſaith: *Be humbled under the mighty hand of God*; which God approveth and encourageth with a gracious promiſe, when he ſaith; —*To this man will I look, even to him, that is of a poor and contrite ſpirit, and trembleth at my word*: this diſpoſition is an inſeparable adherent to contentedneſs; he that hath not his ſpirit thus broken or mollified, will hardly be content in any ſtate; he that is haughty in conceit, and ſturdy in humour will every where find that, which will croſs and diſturb him. 1 Pet. 5. 6. Iſa. 66. 2.

8. It is required that we ſhould, notwithſtanding any meanneſs, any hardneſs of our condition, be meekly and kindly affected toward others, being ſatisfied and pleaſed with their more proſperous ſtate. We ſhould not be angry with the World, becauſe we do not thrive, or flouriſh in it; we ſhould not be ſullen, or peeviſh toward any man, becauſe his fortune is better than ours; we ſhould not repine or grudge at the good ſucceſs of any our brethren, becauſe we want the like our ſelves, *we ſhould rather rejoice with thoſe that rejoice*; innocently filching ſome pleaſure from them, or borrowing ſome ſatisfaction from their enjoyments. It is *humane* thus to do, becauſe of the natural cognation and friendſhip of men; it is more eſpecially *Chriſtian*, becauſe of our ſpiritual conſanguinity; by vertue whereof we are ſo knit together, and made *members each to other*, that *if* (as St. *Paul* telleth us) *one member ſuffer, all the members ſuffer with it, and if one member be honoured, all the members ſhould rejoice with it*: We can hardly be content without thus appropriating the goods, and ſharing in the delights of others; he can never be content, who looketh *with an evil eye* upon other mens proſperity; he cannot do well himſelf, who loveth not to ſee his neighbour do well; numberleſs occaſions will happen to diſcompoſe and vex him.

Ita plerumque contingit, ut dum aliquos fratres noſtros in quantulacunque vique conſtitutos in mediis noſtris anxietatibus cogitamus, non parva ex parte recreemur, tanquam & nos ideo ipſi quietius tranquilliuſque vivamus. Aug. *Ep.* 144.

Rom. 12. 15.

Rom. 12. 15. 1 Cor. 12. 26.

Adverſity impatiently born is apt to ſour our ſpirits, and render us froward toward men; eſpecially when it proceedeth from the unkindneſs, ingratitude, or treachery of friends, or of perſons obliged to us for our good Will, or for benefits done to them; but nothing ſhould render us unkindly diſpoſed toward the World, nothing ſhould extinguiſh charity in us toward any man; ſo plain reaſon teacheth us, ſo great examples enforce, *Moſes* did not loſe his affection towards his Countreymen, becauſe he was by one of them threatened away into baniſhment and vagrancy; the *Apoſtles* became not diſaffected to the World, becauſe it miſuſed and perſecuted them; our Lord did continue moſt earneſtly to deſire, and

laboriously to endeavour the good of those who most despitefully used him; Like theirs, in all cases, should our disposition be; we should ever observe the *Psalmist*'s advice; *Cease from anger, forsake wrath, fret not thy self in any wise to do evil.* Psal. 37. 8.

Again,

9. Contentedness doth imply a freedom from all solicitude and anxiety of mind, in reference to provision for our needs, and conveniencies of life; according to those rules and precepts of *casting our burthen and care upon the Lord*, of *being careful for nothing, but commending our affairs to God's ordering*; according to that most comfortable Precept of our *Lord*, *Take no care, saying what shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or how shall we be cloathed; for your heavenly Father knoweth, that ye want all these things*: If we do not thus, it is hardly possible that we should be content; if we do not depend upon Providence, we cannot scape being often distracted with care, and perplexed with fear; we cannot chearfully hope for any thing we need, nor be quietly secure of any thing we possess. 1 Pet. 5. 7. Psal. 37. 5. 55. 23. Phil. 4. 6. Matt. 6. 31.

10. It requireth also that we should curb our desires, and confine them in the narrowest bounds we can; so as not to affect more in quantity, or better in quality, than our nature and state do require: if we must have superfluities, if we can onely relish dainties, we shall never be pleased; for as nature hath limits, and is content with little; as there is no state in this World, the exigencies whereof may not be answered with a competence; so curiosity is an infinite, and insatiable thing: *He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man; he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich*; that is, he which is curious and nice in his desires, will never have enough: The rule, which (according to St. *Paul*) should regulate our desires is this; *Having food and rayment, let us with them be satisfied*: if this will satisfy us, we may easily obtain satisfaction; a moderate industry with God's blessing, will procure so much; God hath promised to bestow it; if this will not suffice; there is no sure way of getting or keeping more; As God is no-wise obliged to provide us superfluities, or concerned to relieve our extravagant longings; so we may fear that Providence will be ready to cross us in our cares and endeavours tending to those purposes; so that we shall be disappointed in the procurement, or disturbed in the fruition of such needless things: However he that is most scant in his desires, is likely to be most content in his mind: *He* (as *Socrates* said) *is neareſt the Gods* (who needs nothing) *that needeth feweſt things.* Prov. 21. 17.

Ἡδίστα πολυτελείας ἁπαλύουσιν οἱ ἥκιστα πάντες δέομενοι. Epic. *ad* Menœc. *Ventre nihil novi frugalius.* Juv. *Sat.* 5.

Αἱ γὰρ φύσιν ὀρέξεις αὐτάρκεις πεφύκασι. Cl. Alex *Pæd.* 2. 1. 1 Tim. 6. 8.

Si ad naturam vives nunquam eris pauper; si ad opinionem, nunquam dives. Epic Sen. *Ep.* 16.

Ὁ ἐλαχίστων δεόμενος ἐγγύτατα θεῶν. Socr. *in* Xenoph. *Apomn.* 3.

In fine, contentedness doth import, that whatever our condition is, our minds and affections should be modelled, and squared just according to it; so that our inclinations be compliant, our desires be congruous thereto, so that easily we can comport with the inconveniencies, can relish the comforts, can improve the advantages sticking thereto; otherwise like an ill-made Garment, it will sit unhandsome upon us, and be troublesome to us. It is not usually our condition it self, but the unsuitableness thereof to our disposition and desires (which soureth all its sweets, and rendreth its advantages fruitless) that createth discontent; for (although it be very mean) others bear the same chearfully; many would be glad thereof; if therefore we will be content, we must bend our inclinations, and adapt our desires to a correspondence with our state.

If

If we are rich, we ſhould get a large and bountiful heart, otherwiſe our Wealth will hang looſe about us; the care and trouble in keeping it, the ſuſpicion and fear of loſing it, the deſire of amplifying it, the unwillingneſs to ſpend or uſe it, will bereave us of all true ſatisfaction therein, and render it no leſs unſavoury to us, than unprofitable to others.

If we are poor, we ſhould have a frugal, provident, induſtrious mind, ſparing in deſires, free from curioſity, willing to take pains, able to digeſt hardſhips, otherwiſe the ſtraitneſs of our condition will pinch and gall us.

Are we high in dignity or reputation? we then need a mind well ballaſted with ſober thoughts, otherwiſe the Wind of vanity will drive us into abſurd behaviours, thence will daſh us upon diſappointments, and conſequently will plunge us into vexation and diſcontent.

Are we mean and low? we need a meek and lowly, a calm and ſteady ſpirit; not affecting little reſpects, or reſenting the want of them; apt to paſs over or to bear quietly petty affronts and neglects; not apt to be moved by Words ſignifying contempt or diſdain; elſe (being fretted with ſuch things, which in this ill-natur'd and hard-hearted World we may be ſure often to meet with) we ſhall be uneaſie in our minds, and impatiently wiſh a change of our ſtate.

Theſe, and the like diſpoſitions and affections of ſoul this duty containeth, or requireth: from hence ſhould ariſe a correſpondent external demeanour, and ſuch actions as theſe which follow:

1. We ſhould reſtrain our Tongues from all unſeemly and unſavoury expreſſions, implying diſſatisfaction in God's proceedings, or diſpleaſure at his Providence; arguing deſperation or diſtruſt in God; ſuch as were thoſe of the diſcontented and impatient *Iſraelites*; *They* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*) *ſpake againſt God; they ſaid, can God furniſh a table in the wilderneſs? behold he ſmote the rock that the waters guſhed out, and the ſtreams overflowed; can he give bread alſo, can he provide fleſh for his people?* Such as they uſed, of whom the *Prophet* ſaith——*When they ſhall be hungry, they will fret themſelves, and curſe their King and their God*; as thoſe in the *Apocalypſe*, who being afflicted with deſerved judgments, *did blaſpheme the name of God, which had power over thoſe plagues —— blaſphemed the God of heaven becauſe of their pains and ſores.* Into ſuch profane enormities of language is diſcontent apt to break forth, queſtioning the power of God, or his willingneſs to ſuccour us; venting wrath and diſpleaſure toward him; charging him fooliſhly with injuſtice, or with unkindneſs, or with negligence, or with impotency; the abſtaining from which behaviour, under the ſenſe of his bitter calamities, is a great commendation of *Job*; *In all this* ('tis ſaid) *Job ſinned not, neither charged God fooliſhly.*

Pſal. 78. 19. Num. 21. 5.

Iſa. 3. 21. Rev. 19. 9, 11, 21.

Job 1. 22.

Οὐκ ἔδωκεν ἀφροσύνην τῷ θεῷ.
Ἀλλ' ἔχε σιγῇ μῦθον, ὄλιτρεφὲς ὃ θεοῖσι. Hom. *Od.* τ'.

2. We ſhould indeed forbear any the leaſt complaint or murmuring, in regard to the diſpenſations of Providence; or upon diſſatisfaction in the ſtate allotted us: St. *Jude* ſaith, that God in the laſt day *will come, to execute judgment, and to convince men of all their hard ſpeeches, which ungodly ſinners have ſpoken againſt him*: *theſe* (ſubjoineth he) are γογγυσταὶ μεμψίμοιροι, *murmurers, that complain of their lot*; which ſignifieth the heinouſneſs and extreme dangerouſneſs of this practice. *Wherefore doth the living man complain?* is the *Prophet*'s queſtion, implying it to be an unreaſonable and blameable practice. Wherefore the advice of *David* is good; to ſuppreſs all complaint, to be ſtill and ſilent in ſuch caſes: *Be ſtill* (ſaith he) *and know that I am God*, and *Be*

Jude 15, 16.

Lam. 3. 39.

Pſal. 46. 10. 4. 4. 37. 7.

ſilent

ſilent to the Lord; the which Precepts his practice may ſeem well to interpret and back; *I was*, ſaith he, *dumb, I opened not my mouth, becauſe it was thy doing*: and accordingly *Job*, *Behold* (ſaid he, after having conſidered all the reaſons he could imagine of God's proceedings) *I am vile, what ſhall I anſwer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth.* And thus our *Saviour*, when *he was oppreſſed and afflicted, opened not his mouth.*

Pſal. 39. 9. —σιωπῇ Πάσχειν ἄλγεα πολλὰ βίᾳ ὑπὸ νῶτα θέμενον ἀνδρῶν. Od. v.

Job 40. 4.

Iſa. 53. 7.

Δίκαια τῷ Θεῷ πάντων ἕνεκεν. Οὐ γὰρ παυσόμεθα τοῦτο ὁπλίζοντες ἀεὶ ἑαυτοὺς πρὸς τοῖς συμβαίνουσι. Chryſ. ad Olymp. Ep. 11.

Yea it is our duty, in theſe caſes, to ſpend our breath in declaring our ſatisfaction in God's dealing with us; acknowledging his wiſdom, juſtice and goodneſs therein; bleſſing and praiſing him for all that hath befallen us; each of us confeſſing after *David*; *I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulneſs haſt afflicted me*; imitating *Job*, who upon the loſs of all his goods did ſay no more than this; *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away*; *bleſſed be the name of the Lord.*

Pſal. 119. 75.

Job 1. 21.

4. We ſhould abſtain from all irregular, unlawful and unworthy courſes toward the removal or remedy of our needs, or croſſes, chuſing rather to abide quietly under their preſſure, than by any unwarrantable means to relieve, or relaxe our ſelves; rather bearing patiently, than violently, like thoſe in the *Prophet*, *breaking our yoke, and burſting our bands. Take heed, regard not iniquity*; *for this haſt thou choſen rather than affliction.* We ſhould rather continue poor, than by couzenage, or rapine endeavour to raiſe our fortune; we ſhould rather lye under diſgrace and contempt, than by ſinful or ſordid compliances ſtrive to acquire the reſpect and favour of men; we ſhould rather willingly reſt in the loweſt condition, than do as thoſe, who by diſturbing the World, by fomenting diſorders and factions, by ſupplanting their neighbours Welfare, by venting ſlanders and diſtractions, do labour to amplify their eſtate: We ſhould rather endure any inconvenience or diſtreſs, than have recourſe to ways of evading them, diſallowed by God; doing as the *Jews* did, who in their ſtraits, againſt the declared pleaſure of God, *ſet their faces toward* Ægypt, *ſtrengthened themſelves in the ſtrength of* Pharaoh, *truſted in the ſtaff of that broken reed.* In neglect or diffidence toward God, to embrace ſuch aids, is (as God in the *Prophet* declareth) a very blameable and miſchievous folly: *Ephraim* (ſaith he) *is like a ſilly dove without heart*; *they call to* Ægypt, *they go to* Aſſyria —— *Woe unto them, for they have fled from me*; *deſtruction unto them, becauſe they have tranſgreſſed againſt me.* We may conſider how St. *Paul* reproveth the *Corinthians* for ſeeking a redreſs of wrong, ſcandalous and diſhonourable to the Church, *Now therefore it is utterly a fault among you, that ye go to law one with another*; *Why do ye not rather take wrong*; *why do ye not rather ſuffer your ſelves to be defrauded?* even to right your ſelves in a way, whereby any diſhonour may come to God, or damage to his Church is not to be approved; and better it is in the *Apoſtle*'s judgment, to bear any injury or damage our ſelves, *Better it is* (ſaith St. *Peter*) *if the will of God be ſo, that we ſuffer for well-doing, than to do ill.* And, *Let them, who ſuffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their Souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creatour*; is another wholeſom advice of that great *Apoſtle.*

Jer. 5. 5.

Job 36. 21.

Jer. 42. 15. 2. 18. 13. Iſa. 30. 2. 36. 6. 31. 1. Ezek. 17. 15.

Hoſ. 7. 11, 13.

1 Cor. 6. 7.

1 Pet. 3. 17. 4. 19.

5. We ſhould, notwithſtanding any adverſity, proceed in our affairs (ſuch as God requireth, or reaſon putteth us upon) with alacrity, courage and induſtry; performing however, ſo far as our circumſtances do permit, what is good and fit for us: No diſappointment or croſs, no ſtraits

or

or grievances of condition should render us listless, or lazy, but rather it should quicken and inflame our activity; this being a good way to divert us from the sense of our misfortunes, and to comfort us under their pressure; as also the readiest way to remove or to abate them, τὸ παρὸν εὖ θέσθαι, *to order the present well*, what ever it be; to make the best of a bad matter, to march forward whither reason calls (how difficultly soever, or slowly it be) in a rough or dirty way; not to yeild to difficulties, but resolutely to encounter them, to struggle lustily with them, to endeavour with all our might to surmount them; are acts worthy of a manly reason and courage; to direct ill accidents to good ends, and improve them to honest uses, is the work of a noble vertue. If a bad game be dealt us, we should not presently throw up, but play it out so well as we can; so perhaps we may save somewhat, we shall at least be busie till a better come. *Put thy trust in the Lord, and be doing good*, is the *Psalmist*'s advice in such a case; and it is a practice necessary to the procuring and maintaining content; If we be not otherwise well employed, we shall be apt, in our thoughts, to melancholize, and dote upon our mischances, the sense of them will fasten upon our spirits, and gnaw our hearts.

Κερδαντέον τὸ παρὸν οὐν ἀλογίᾳ Ant. 4. 26. 6. 2.

Τὸ παρὸν ἀνυστέον ὡς ὀυίνηται χὴ δικαιούλω. Id. 12. 1.

Tuus esto malis, sed contra audentior ito.

Psal. 37. 3.

6. We should behave our selves fairly and kindly toward the instruments and abetters of our adversity; toward those who brought us into it, and those who detain us under it, by keeping off relief, and those who forbear to afford the succour we might expect; forbearing to express any wrath or displeasure, to exercise any revenge or enmity toward them; but rather, even upon that score, bearing good will, and expressing kindness toward them; not onely as to our brethren, whom, according to the general Law of Charity, we are bound to love, but as to the servants of God in this particular case, and the instruments of his pleasure toward us; considering, that by maligning or molesting them, we do express ill resentments of God's dealing vvith us, and, in effect, through their sides do vvound his Providence; thus did the good *King* behave himself tovvard *Shimei*, vvhen he vvas bitterly reproached and cursed by him; not suffering (upon this accompt, because he vvas God's instrument of afflicting himself) that any harm should be done unto him; thus the holy *Apostles being reviled did bless, being defamed did intreat*; thus our Lord demeaned himself toward his spiteful adversaries; who, *when he was reviled, did not revile again; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but committed it to him that judgeth righteously.* In all these cases we should at least observe the rules and advices of the *Wise-man*; *Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me, I will render to the man according to his work*; *Say thou not, I will recompence evil; but wait on the Lord, and he shall save thee.*

2 Sam. 16. 7.

1 Cor. 4. 12.

1 Pet. 2. 23. 3. 9.

Prov. 24. 29. 20. 22.

Discontent usually consisteth not so much in displeasure for the things we suffer, as at the persons who bring them on us, or who do not help to rid us from them; it is their presumed injury or discourtesie which we do fret at; such passions therefore toward men being discarded, our evils presently will become supportable, and content easily will ensue. As men in any sickness or pain, if their friends are about them (affording comfort or assistence) do not seem to feel any thing, and forbear complaining; so if the World about us doth please us, if we bear no disaffection or grudge toward any person in view, our adversity will appear less grievous, it will indeed commonly be scarce sensible to us.

In these and such like acts, the duty and vertue of contentedness doth especially

especially reside; or it is employed and exercised by them: And so much may suffice for the explication of its nature; I come now to consider the way of attaining it, intimated by St. *Paul* here, when he saith, *I have learned.*

SERMON VI.

Of Contentment.

PHIL. 4. 11.

I have learned, &c.

THESE Words signify how contentedness may be attained, or how it is produced: It is not an endowment innate to us; it doth not arrive by chance into us; it is not to be purchased by any price; it springeth not up of its self, nor ariseth from the quality of any state; but it is a product of discipline; *I have learned.*

It is a question debated in *Plato*, εἰ διδακτὸν ἡ ἀρετή, *whether Vertue be to be learned*, St. *Paul* plainly resolveth it in this case by his own experience and testimony. What *Seneca* saith in general of vertue (*Nature giveth not Vertue; it is an art to become good*) is most true of this vertue; it is an art, with which we are not born, no more than with any other art or science; the which, as other arts, cannot be acquired without studious application of mind, and industrious exercise: No art indeed requireth more hard study and pain toward the acquiry of it, there being so many difficulties, so many obstacles in the way thereto: We have no great capacity, no towardly disposition to learn it; We must, in doing it, deny our carnal sense, we must settle our vvild fancy, and suppress fond conceits; vve must bend our stiff and stubborn inclinations; we must repress and restrain vvanton desires; vve must allay and still tumultuous passions; vve must cross our humour, and curb our temper; vvhich to do is a hard chapter to learn: Much consideration, much practice, much contention and diligence are required thereto.

Non dat natura virtutem, ars est bonum fieri. Sen. *Ep.* 89.

Virtus etiamsi quosdam impetus ex natura sumit, tamen perficienda doctrina est. Quintil. 12. 2.

Hence it is an art which we may observe few do much study; and of the students therein few are great proficients; so that *Qui fit, Mecænas? Horace*'s question, *How comes it to pass, that no body liveth content with the lot assigned by God?* wanted not sufficient ground.

However it is not like the *Quadrature of the circle*, or the *Philosophers Stone*, an art impossible to be learned, and which will baffle all study: there

there are examples which ſhew it to be obtainable; there are rules and precepts, by obſerving which we may arrive to it.

And it is certainly a moſt excellent piece of learning; moſt deſerving our earneſt ſtudy: no other ſcience will yeild ſo great ſatisfaction, or good uſe; all other ſciences, in compariſon thereto, are dry and fruitleſs curioſities; for were we Maſters of all other knowledge, yet wanted the skill of being content, we ſhould not be wiſe or happy; happineſs and diſcontent are ἀσύμφυτα (things incompatible.)

But how then may this skill be learned? I anſwer, chiefly (divine grace concurring) by theſe three ways. 1. By underſtanding the rules and precepts, wherein the practice thereof conſiſteth. 2. By diligent exerciſe, or application of thoſe rules to practice; whereby the habit will be produced. 3. By ſeriouſly conſidering, and impreſſing upon our minds thoſe rational inducements (ſuggeſted by the nature and reaſon of things) which are apt to perſwade the practice thereof. The *firſt* way I have already endeavoured to declare; the *ſecond* wholly dependeth upon the will and endeavour of the learner; the *third* I ſhall now inſiſt upon, propounding ſome rational conſiderations, apt (by God's help) to perſwade contentedneſs, and ſerving to cure the malady of diſcontent. They may be drawn from ſeveral heads; from God, from our ſelves, from our particular condition or ſtate; from the World or general ſtate of men here; from the particular ſtate of other men in compariſon to ours; from the nature and conſequences of the duty it ſelf: Every thing about us well examined and pondered, will miniſter ſomewhat inducing and aſſiſting thereto.

I. In regard to God we may conſider, that equity doth exact, and gratitude requireth, and all reaſon dictateth, that we ſhould be content; or that in being diſcontented we behave our ſelves very unbeſeemingly and unworthily, are very unjuſt, very ingrateful, and very fooliſh toward him. 1 Sam. 3. 18.

1. Equity doth exact this duty of us, and in performing it we act juſtly toward God, both admitting his due right, and acknowledging his good exerciſe thereof; That ſaying in the *Goſpel*, *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own*? is a moſt evident maxime of equity; it is therefore the natural right, and prerogative of God (as the Creator and Preſerver, and conſequently the abſolute Lord, Owner and Governour of all things) to aſſign his ſtation, and allot his portion to every perſon, as he judgeth good and convenient; it is moſt juſt that inviolably he ſhould enjoy this right; He being alſo infinitely wiſe and good, it is likewiſe moſt juſt to acknowledge that he doth perfectly well manage this right; Now by contentful ſubmiſſion to God's diſpoſal of things, we do worthily expreſs our due regard to both theſe, avowing his right, and approving his exerciſe thereof; but by diſcontent and regret at what happeneth, we do in effect injure God in both thoſe reſpects, diſavowing his right, and impeaching his management. We do thereby ſo renounce his right, as (ſo far as conceit and wiſh do reach) to invade it, and uſurp it to our ſelves: ſignifying, that in our opinion things ought not to be ordered according to his judgment and pleaſure, but after our fancy and humour; we claim to our ſelves the priviledge of controlling his eſtate, and diſpenſing his goods, ſo as to be our own carvers, and to aſſume to our ſelves ſo much as we think good; we imply, that, if we were able, we would extort the power out of his hands, and manage it our ſelves, modelling the World according to our conceits and deſires. Matt. 20. 15.

Multos inveni æquos adversus homines, adversus Deos neminem: Sen. *Ep.* 93.

We do also (since we cannot but perceive the other attempt of dispossessing God to be frivolous and fruitless) in effect charge God with misdemeanour, with iniquity or infirmity in his distribution and disposal of things; intimating, that in our opinion he doth not order them so justly, or so wisely as might be (not so well as we in our Wisdom and Justice should order them) for did we conceive them managed for the best, we could not but judge it most unreasonable to be aggrieved, or to complain: so heinously insolent, and unjust are we in being discontent. In earnest, Which is most equal, that God should have his Will, or we? For shame we shall say God: Why then do we not contentedly let him have it?

'Tis indeed, if we consider it, the highest piece of injustice that we can be guilty of; exceeding that which we commit in any other sort of disobedience. For as in any state Seditious Mutining is the greatest crime, as most directly violating the Majesty, and subverting the authority of the Prince; so in the World, none may be supposed more to offend and wrong its Sovereign Governour, than such malecontents, who dislike and blame his proceedings: Even a *Heathen* could teach us, that it is our duty to *subject our mind to him that administreth all things, as good Citizens to the Law of the Commonwealth*; if we do not we are rebellious and seditious, which is the highest pitch of injustice toward our most gracious Sovereign.

Τῷ αὐτῷ γνώμῃ χαίνειν τῷ διοικοῦντι τὰ ὅλα καθάπερ οἱ ἀγαθοὶ πολῖται τῷ νόμῳ τῆς πόλεως. Arr. 1. 12.

Again, there can be no greater injury, or affront offered to God, than to *give him the lie*, by questioning his veracity or fidelity; this discontent plainly doth involve: for God hath expressly declared himself ready upon all occasions to do us good; he hath promised to *care for us*, and *never to forsake us*, or leave us destitute; which Word of his if we did not distrust, and take him to be unfaithful, we could not be discontent: As no man is displeased with his condition, or suspicious of want, who knoweth that he hath abundant supply of all that he can need in a sure place; that he hath a person most able, most willing, most faithful engaged to succour him; so did we believe God to be true, who hath promised to help us, we could not be discontented for fear of any want.

1 John 5. 10.

Matt. 6. 25, 30. Heb. 13. 5.

We must at least in so doing, suspect God to be deficient in goodness toward us, or unwilling to help us, or we must apprehend him impotent, and unable to perform what he would, and what he hath promised, for us (like those Infidels, who said, *Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? Can he give bread also, can he provide flesh for his people?*) which conceits of God are also very unworthy, and injurious to him.

Psal. 78. 19.

2. Gratitude requireth of us this duty: for we having no right, or title to any thing; all that we have coming from God's pure bounty; he having upon us all (whatever our condition comparatively is, or may seem to us) freely conferred many great benefits, common to all men among us (our being, life, reason, capacity of eternal happiness, manifold spiritual blessings, incomparably pretious and excellent) we in all reason should be thankful for these, without craving more, or complaining for the want of other things. Whereas also all events (how cross soever to our sensual conceits, or appetites) are by God designed, and dispensed for our good, gratitude requireth, that we should thank God for them, and not murmur against them.

Iniquus est qui muneris sui arbitrium danti non relinquit, avidus qui non lucri loco habet quod accipit, sed damni quod reddidit, &c. Sen. ad Polyb. 29.

Surely if instead of rendring God thanks for all the excellent gifts which he most liberally (without any previous obligation to us, or desert of ours)

ours) hath beſtowed on us, and continueth to beſtow, we fret, and quarrel, that he doth not in ſmaller matters ſeem to cocker us, we are extreamly ingrateful, and diſingenuous toward him: If any great Perſon here ſhould freely beſtow on us gifts of huge value (high preferment, or much Wealth) but with good reaſon, as we might preſume, ſhould withhold from us ſome trifle, that we fancy or dote upon, ſhould we not be very unworthy, if we ſhould take it ill and be angry with him for that cauſe? The caſe is plainly the ſame; God hath in the frankeſt manner beſtowed on us innumerable and ineſtimable goods, in compariſon whereto any comfort or convenience of our ſtate here is very trivial and deſpicable; Are we not therefore very ingrateful, if we heinouſly reſent the want of any ſuch things; if upon any ſuch accompt we diſguſt his Providence? Do we not deal, beyond all expreſſion, unworthily with God, in ſo much undervaluing the goods which he hath given us, or doth offer us, and hath put in our reach? He hath made us capable of the greateſt goods imaginable, and faithfully upon eaſie terms proffereth them to us; he even tendereth himſelf (himſelf, the immenſe and all-comprehending good, the fountain of all joy and bliſs) to be fully enjoyed by us; his Wiſdom he offereth to inſtruct and guide us, his power to protect and guard us, his fulneſs to ſupply us, his goodneſs to comfort us; he offereth his love and favour to us, in having which we virtually, and in effect have all things; becoming thereby, in the higheſt degree, rich and honourable and happy; And is it not then outragious unworthineſs to prize any other thing (any petty accommodation of this tranſitory life, any pitiful toy here) ſo much, as to be diſpleaſed for the want thereof; as if all this were not enough to ſatisfie our needs, or ſatiate our deſires; as if notwithſtanding all theſe immenſe effuſions (yea as it were profuſions) of bounty upon us, we could be indigent or unhappy? *Shall we* (to uſe that holy and moſt ingenuous conſideration of *Job*) *receive ſo much good from the bountiful hand of God, and ſhall we not contentedly receive, or bear ſo ſmall evils from him*? Evils indeed in name, and to groſs ſenſe, but not ſo in reality, not ſo in effect, at leaſt not ſo in God's deſign; but rather things very convenient and profitable for us; which is another aggravation of our ingratitude; for Job 2. 10.

Εὐχαριςῶ σοι πάτερ ὦ ποιητὰ ὧν ὁρᾷς ἀνθρώπων — ὅτι ἔχοντας ἡμᾶς δι' ποιεῖς &c. ſaid *Philagrius* in a grievous diſeaſe. *Naz.* Ep. 66.

Are we not alſo very ingrateful in miſapprehending, and diſliking that, which God doeth out of very gracious intentions toward us; in loathing his fatherly and friendly diſpenſations; the fatherly chaſtiſements and friendly diſciplines, which he unwillingly is forced (is I ſay forced by his own great love, and by our preſſing needs) to inflict or impoſe upon us? Surely our ill opinion of, or *deſpiſing* (as the *Wiſe-man* calleth it) theſe unpleaſant bleſſings is no ſmall fault; Neither will our not diſcerning (out of affected dulneſs, and ſtupid gravity not diſcerning) the wiſdom of God's methods, and the wholeſomeneſs of the means he uſeth to better us, excuſe us from foul ingratitude.

Ἐπειδὰν τὸ μὴ πάσχειν ἐκ ἔχω, τοῦτο γὲ τῷ πάσχειν παρεγκελεύομαι, τὸ φέρειν, καὶ τὸ εὐχαριςεῖν. *Naz. de ſe. Ep.* 63.

Prov. 3. 11.

3. Again, upon many accompts, reaſon farther dictateth in reſpect to God, that we ſhould be content: becauſe it is moſt reaſonable to acquieſce in God's choice of our ſtate, he being infinitely more wiſe than we, and infinitely better underſtanding what is good for us than we can do: becauſe he is well affected to us, and more truly loveth us than we do our ſelves; becauſe he hath a juſt right, and irreſiſtible power to diſpoſe of us, the which (whatever we can doe, however we reſent it) he will effectually

Εὐχαριςεῖς τοῖς θεοῖς ἁπλῶς παίδας δοῦναι ὡς τοῖς θεοῖς καλῶς εἰδόσι ὁποῖα ἀγαθά ἐςι. Xenoph. *de* Socr.

Charior eſt illis homo quam ſibi.

fectually make uſe of, whence it is extremely fooliſh to be diſcontent: fooliſh it is to be diſſatisfied with the reſults of his Wiſdom, adhering to our vain apprehenſions, fooliſh to diſtruſt his goodneſs in compliance with our fond ſelf love; fooliſh to conteſt his unqueſtionable right and uncontroulable power, having nothing but meer impotency to oppoſe againſt them; no leſs than downright madneſs it is to fret and fume at that which we can no wiſe help, to bark at that which lodgeth in heaven ſo far high above us, to ſolicite deaf neceſſity with our ineffectual Wailings; for if we think, that our diſpleaſure will affect God, that our complaints will incline him to alter our condition, or comply with our Wiſhes, we do conceit vainly, and without any ground; ſooner may we, by our imagination, ſtop the Tides of the Sea, or turn the Streams of Rivers backward; ſooner, by our cries, may we ſtay the Sun, and change all the courſes of the Stars, than by our paſſionate reſentments or moanful clamours we can check the current of affairs, or alter that ſtate of things, which is by God's high decree eſtabliſhed: diſcontented behaviour will rather faſten our condition, or remove it into a worſe place; as it highly doth offend God, and encreaſeth our guilt, ſo it moveth God to continue, and to augment our evils. Thus lifting up our eyes to heaven, and conſidering the reference our diſpoſition and demeanour hath to God, will induce us to bear our caſe contentedly.

Οὐ γὰρ τις πράξις πάλεται κρυφῆ θεοῦ γε νοῦν. *I. ω*

Σὺ δ' εἰκ' ἀνάγκῃ καὶ θεοῖσι μὴ μάχου. Eurip.

Lam. 3. 39.

II. Again, Reflecting upon our ſelves, we may obſerve much reaſon to be content with our ſtate; in whatever capacity we look upon our ſelves, it in reaſon becometh us, we in duty are obliged to be ſo.

As men and creatures we naturally are indigent and impotent; we have no juſt claim to any thing, nor any poſſeſſion maintainable by our power; all that we have, or can have, cometh from moſt pure courteſie and bounty; wherefore how little ſoever is allowed us, we have no wrong done us, nor can we juſtly complain thereat: Such beggars as we are muſt not pretend to be chuſers; if any thing be given us we may be glad, we ſhould be thankful. It is for thoſe who have a right and a power to maintain it, to reſent and expoſtulate, if their due be withheld; but for us that never had any thing, which we could call our own; that have no power to get or keep any thing; for us that came into the World naked and defenſeleſs, that live here in continual, abſolute and arbitrary dependance for all our livelihood and ſubſiſtence, to conteſt with him that maintaineth us, or to complain of his dealing, is ridiculouſly abſurd and vain.

Upon a moral accompt we have leſs reaſon to challenge ought, or to complain of any thing; for we deſerve nothing but evil: If we rightly eſteem and value our ſelves, any thing will ſeem good enough for us, any condition will appear better than we deſerve: duly examining the imperfections and infirmities of our nature, the diſorder and depravedneſs of our hearts, the demeanours and enormities of our lives, we cannot but apprehend, that we are even unworthy of the *crumbs which fall from our maſters table*; we cannot but acknowledge with the good *Patriarch*, that we are *leſs than the leaſt of God's mercies*. Conſidering our natural unworthineſs, we ſhall ſee that we deſerve not ſo much as thoſe common benefits which all men enjoy, and without which we cannot ſubſiſt; ſo that in regard to them we ſhall be ready to acknowledge with the *Pſalmiſt*, *Lord what is man that thou takeſt knowledge of him, or the Son of man, that thou makeſt accompt of him*? Trying our hearts and examining our ways, we ſhall ſoon diſcover it to be abundant mercy, that we are not utterly

Matt. 15. 17.

Gen. 32. 10.

Pſal. 44. 3. Job 7. 27.

deprived

deprived of all good things, ſtript of all comforts, yea diſpoſſeſſed of our very being and life it ſelf; that we are obliged to acknowledge with thoſe in the *Lamentations*, *It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not conſumed, because his compaſſions fail not.* Were we far better than we are, yet it would not become us to conteſt with him, to whoſe diſpoſal and judgment we are ſubject; as *Job* teacheth us: *Behold* (ſaith he) *God taketh away, who can hinder him, who will ſay unto him, what doeſt thou? If he will not withdraw his anger, the proud * helpers do ſtoop under him; how much leſs ſhall I anſwer him, and chuſe out my words to reaſon with him; whom though I were righteous, I would not anſwer, but I would make ſupplication to my judge*; but for us, men ſo unrighteous and guilty, to debate with, to queſtion the proceedings of our Judge it is much more unſeemly.

Lam. 3. 22.

Job 9. 12, &c.

* Κύπτ.

(Job 9. 32.)

Nothing can be more abſurd, than for men ſo deeply indebted, than for ſinners ſo very obnoxious to Wrath, to be aggrieved in any ſtate: Shall we, who are conſcious to our ſelves of ſo many great ſins againſt our God; who by wilful tranſgreſſions, or ſlothful neglects, have ſo much affronted and offended him; who have ſo little requited his love, and ſo much abuſed his patience; who have born ſo little fruit, and rendred him ſo little ſervice, ſhall we be angry that our humour is not pleaſed in all things? Shall we affect to ſwim in plenty, to wallow in pleaſure, to bask our ſelves in eaſe; to be fed with dainties, to be gaily clothed, to flouriſh in a brave and ſplendid condition, to be worſhipped and honoured, who deſerve not the meaneſt competence, or loweſt reſpect, to whom it is a great favour that we are permitted to ſubſiſt, whom ſtrict juſtice would often have caſt into utter miſery and diſconſolateneſs? It is not ſurely for ſuch perſons to be diſſatisfied with any thing in this World, but to bleſs God's exceeding mercy, that they abide there on this ſide of the bottomleſs pit; 'tis their part, with moſt ſubmiſſive patience, to bear whatever is inflicted on them, humbly ſaying with him in the *Prophet*, *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, becauſe I have ſinned againſt him.* Seeing, whatever our croſſes or ſufferings be, we cannot but confeſs to God with thoſe in *Ezra*, *Thou haſt puniſhed us leſs than our iniquities deſerve*; being gainers upon the matter, having ſo much of our debt remitted in effect, being in compariſon to what was due to us very tolerably, yea very favourably dealt with, Why ſhould we be diſſatisfied? If in ſuch caſes men ſhould deal ſo favourably with us, we ſhould be much pleaſed, and ready to thank them; Why then ſhould we take it ill of God, when he even in his hardeſt proceedings againſt us, expreſſeth ſo much indulgence and mercy?

Mic. 7. 9.

Ezr. 9. 13.

If we muſt be diſpleaſed, and luſt to complain, we have reaſon much rather to accuſe our ſelves, than to exclaim at Providence, to bewail our ſins, than to deplore our fortune: for our evils are not indeed ſo much the voluntary Works of God, who *doth not afflict willingly, or grieve the children of men*, as the natural products of our ſin, which we do wilfully commit: It is (as the *Prophet* ſpeaketh) *our ſins* that *withhold good things from us*; and bring evil things upon us: *Fools, becauſe of their tranſgreſſion, and becauſe of their iniquities, are afflicted.* We make adverſity neceſſary, or expedient for us, then we cry out upon it: We labour in Planting, but cannot brook *the fruit of our doings*; we, like prodigals, fling away our eſtate in wanton profuſions, then complain of want; we affect and chuſe the cauſes, but loath, and cannot abide the certain conſequences; ſo fond in our conceits, ſo perverſe are we in our affections: *Wherefore doth the*

Lam. 3. 33. Ἀυθαίρετα πάθεα.

Jer. 5. 25.

Pſal. 107. 17.

Jer. 17. 10. 21. 14. 32. 19. 6. 19.

Lam. 3. 39. גבר *the living man complain, for the punishment of his sins?* so vvell might the *Prophet* demand and expostulate.

We may farther, looking on our selves; consider our selves as servants to God, or rather as slaves, absolutely subject to his disposal; And shall any servant, shall a mere slave presume to chuse his place, or determine his rank in the family? Shall he appoint to himself what office he will discharge, what garb he shall go in, what diet he must have, what he will doe, and how he shall be accommodated? Is it not fit that all these things should be left to our Master's discretion and pleasure, it is most reasonable that we should throughly acquiesce in his determination: even a *Pagan* Philosopher could teach us, that this is reasonable; who thus piously directeth his Speech to God: *For the rest use me to what thou pleasest. I do consent unto thee, and am indifferent. I refuse nothing which seemeth good to thee; lead me whither thou wilt; put on me what garment thou pleasest: Wilt thou have me to be a governour or a private man, to stay at home or to be banished away, to be poor or to be rich? I will, in respect to all these things, apologize for thee with men*; thus did *Epictetus* say, and such speech well becometh our relation to God: Servants should be content with their Masters appointments and allowances; they should not onely themselves forbear to find fault with, but be ready to maintain his proceedings against any, who shall presume to reprehend or blame them. Especially such servants as we are, who, *after we have done all things commanded us, must acknowledge that we are unprofitable servants*; such as can bring no considerable benefit to our Lord, or any-wise advance his state; such as therefore cannot challenge any Wages from him, more than he out of mere favour is pleased to allow: Could we, by our labours, enrich God, or raise him in dignity, or procure delight to him, it might seem congruous that he should answerably reward us; but as he getteth nothing by us, so we cannot require any thing from him: our best services do indeed rather need pardon, than deserve any reward: No man hath lived so well, that he can pretend any thing from God, that he is not indeed much behindhand in his accompts with God, having received from God far more of benefit than he can return to him in service: No man, without extream presumption and arrogance, can offer to prescribe, in what measure, or what manner God should reward him.

Χρῶ μοι λοιπὸν εἰς ὃ ἂν θέλῃς. Ὁμογνωμονῶ σοι, ἴσος εἰμὶ. Οὐδὲν παρῃτῆμαι σοῦ σοι δοκέντων. Ὅπῃ θέλεις ἄγε· ἵνῳ θέλεις ἐθῶ τὰ σχήματα. Ἄρχειν με θέλεις, ἰδιωτεύειν μένειν φεύγειν, πένεσθαι, πλουτεῖν; ἐγώ σοι ὑπὲρ ἁπάντων τούτων πρὸς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἀπολογήσομαι. Arr. 2. 16.

Luc. 17. 10.

Again, if we consider our selves as the children of God, either by birth or nature, or by adoption and grace, How can we be discontent for any thing? Have we not thence great reason to hope, or rather to be confident, that we shall never want any good thing (necessary or convenient for us) that no great evill shall ever oppress us? For is not God hence by paternal disposition inclined, is he not in a manner, by paternal duty, engaged, in all needful occasions, to supply and succour us? Can we (without great profaneness, and no less folly) surmise, that he, which is so immensly good, will be a bad (an unkind, or a neglectful) Father to us? No, as there is no other Father in goodness comparable to him, so none, in real effects of benignity, can come near him; so our Lord assureth us: *If ye* (saith he) *being evil, know how to give good things to your children; How much more will your heavenly Father give good things to his children that ask him?*

Matt. 7. 11.

If we consider our selves as Christians, we have still more reason to practise this duty: As such, we are not onely possessed of goods abundantly

dantly ſufficient to ſatisfie our deſires; we have hopes able to raiſe our minds above the ſenſe of all preſent things; we have entertainments that ever may divert our minds, and fill our hearts with comfort; but we have alſo an aſſurance of competent ſupplies of temporal goods; for, *Godlineſs is profitable to all things, having the promiſe both of the preſent life, and of that which is to come*: and, *If we ſeek firſt the Kingdom of heaven, and its righteouſneſs, all theſe things ſhall be added unto us.* It is indeed ſtrangely unhandſome for a Chriſtian ever to droop, or to be diſconſolate; for a friend of God, and an heir of heaven to think he wants any thing, or fear that he ſhall ever want; for him, whoſe treaſure and heart are above, to be ſo concerned with any thing here, as deeply to reſent it.

1 Tim. 4. 8.

Matt. 6. 33.

Again, if we reflect upon our ſelves as rational men, How for ſhame can we be diſcontent? Do we not therein much diſparage that excellent perfection of our nature? Is it not the proper work of reaſon to prevent things hurtful or offenſive to us, when that may be done; to remove them, if they are removeable; if neither of theſe can be compaſſed, to allay and mitigate them; ſo that we may be able well to ſupport them? Is it not its principal uſe to drive away thoſe fond conceits, and to quell thoſe troubleſome paſſions, which create, or foment diſquiet, and diſpleaſure to us? if it cannot do this, What doth it ſignifie? To what purpoſe have we it? Is not our condition really worſe than that of brute beaſts, if reaſon ſerveth only to diſcry the cauſes of trouble, but cannot enable to bear it? All the reaſons we have produced, and all that we ſhall produce againſt diſcontent, will, if we are reaſonable men, and reaſon availeth any thing, have this effect upon us.

Wherefore conſidering our ſelves, our capacities, our relations, our actions, it is moſt reaſonable to be content with our condition, and with whatever doth befal us.

SERMON VII.

Of Contentment.

PHIL. 4. 11.

I have learned in whatever ſtate, &c.

III. FArther, if we conſider, our condition (be it what it will, how poor, how mean, how deſpicable and forlorn ſoever) we can have from it no reaſonable ground of diſcontent.

1. Our condition in this World cannot (if rightly eſtimated, and well managed) be extremely bad, or ſorrowful; nothing here can occur inſupportable

ſupportable, or very grievous in it ſelf; we cannot, if we pleaſe, want any thing conſiderable, and the defect whereof may not be ſupplied, or ſupported by far better enjoyments. If we have high opinions of ſome things, as very excellent, or very needful for us, it's no wonder if we do want them, that our condition is unpleaſant to us; if we take other things for huge evils, then, if they be incombent on us, we can hardly ſcape being diſpleaſed; but if we thoroughly look through ſuch things, and ſcan them exactly, valuing them, not according to fallacious impreſſions of ſenſe, or illuſive dreamings of fancy, but according to ſound dictates of reaſon, we may find, that neither abſence of the former, nor the preſence of the latter doth make our condition much worſe, or render our caſe deplorable.

We are, for inſtance, poor: that condition rightly weighed, is not ſo very ſad: for what is poverty? what but the abſence of a few ſuperfluous things, which pleaſe wanton fancy rather than anſwer need; without which nature is eaſily ſatisfied, and which if we do not affect, we cannot want? what is it but to wear coarſe clothes, to feed on plain and ſimple fare, to work and take ſome pains, to ſit or go in a lower place, to have no heaps of caſh, or hoards of grain, to keep no retinue, to have few friends, and not one flatterer? and what great harm in this? It is a ſtate, which hath its no ſmall conveniences and comforts, its happy fruits and conſequences; which freeth us from many cares and diſtractions, from many troubles and croſſes, from many encombrances, many dangers, many temptations, many ſore diſtempers of body and ſoul, many grievous miſchiefs, to which Wealth is expoſed; which maintaineth health, induſtry and ſobriety; diſpoſeth us to feed heartily, to move nimbly, to ſleep ſweetly; which preſerveth us from luxury, from ſatiety; from ſloth and unwieldineſs. It yeildeth diſpoſition of mind, freedom and leiſure to attend the ſtudy of truth, the acquiſt of vertue. It is a ſtate, which many have born with great chearfulneſs; many (very wiſe men) have voluntarily embraced; which is allotted by divine Wiſdom to moſt men; and which the beſt men often do endure; to which God hath declared an eſpecial regard, which the mouth of truth hath proclaimed happy; which the Son of God hath dignified by his choice, and ſanctified by his partaking deeply thereof; and can ſuch a condition be very loathſome; can it reaſonably diſpleaſe us?

Tert. *de Pat.* 7.

Τὰ δ' ἀεγυρώματ' ὄζειν ἤτε πορφύρα
Εἰς τὰς τεταγωδὰς χρήσιμ' ἦν εἰς ἃ βίον.
Socrat.

Vid. Plut. *in* Ariſt.

Si vis vacare animo, aut pauper eſſe oportet, aut pauperi ſimilis.
Multùm ad Philoſophandum obſtitere divitiæ; paupertas expedita eſt, ſecura eſt. Sen. *Ep.* 17.
Sæpius pauper, & fidelius ridet. Sen. *Ep.* 80.

Pſal. 10. 14. 35. 10. 68. 10. 69. 33. 72. 4. 13. 140. 12. 146. 7. 147. 2. Luk. 6. 20. Jam 2. 5. Iſa. 66. 2.

Again, thou art ſuppoſe fallen into diſgrace, or from honour and credit art depreſſed into a ſtate of contempt and infamy? this alſo rightly prized is no ſuch wretchedneſs; for what doth this import? what, but a change of opinion in giddy men, which thou doſt not feel, which thou art not concerned in, if thou pleaſeſt; which thou never hadſt reaſon much to regard, or at all to rely upon? what is thy loſs therein? it is the breaking of a bubble, the ſinking of a Wave, the changing of a Wind, the cracking of a thing moſt brittle, the ſlipping away of a thing moſt fugacious and ſlippery; What is honour and fame, but thought, and what more flitting, What ſooner gone away than a thought? and why art thou diſpleaſed at the loſs of a thing ſo very ſlender and ſlimme? if thou didſt know its nature, thou canſt not be diſappointed; if thou didſt not, it was worth thy while to be thus informed by experience, that thou

thou maieſt not any more regard it. Is the contempt, thou haſt incurred, from thy fault? bear the conſequence thereof patiently, and do thy beſt by removing the cauſe to reverſe the effect: is it undeſerved and cauſeleſs? be ſatisfied in thy innocence, and be glad that thou art above the folly and injuſtice of thoſe, who contemn thee. Let thy affections rather be employed in pitty of theirs, than in diſpleaſure for thy own caſe. Did (let me ask thee again) the good opinion of men pleaſe thee? that pleaſure was fond and vain, and it is well thou art rid of it? did it not much affect thee, why then doſt thou much grieve at the loſs thereof? Is not alſo thy fortune in this kind the ſame with that of the beſt men? have not thoſe who have deſerved moſt honour, been expoſed to moſt contempt? *But now* (*Job* could ſay) *they that are younger than I have me in deriſion,* Job 30. 1, 10. —— *they abhor me, they flee far from me, and ſpare not to ſpit in my face.* And, *I am,* (could that great and good *King* ſay) *a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and deſpiſed of the people; All they that ſee me, laugh me to ſcorn; they ſhoot out the lip, they ſhake the head,* ——and, we are *defamed,* we are *reviled, we are made as the filth of the world, and the off-ſcouring of all things unto this day,* could the holy *Apoſtles* ſay; and *He is deſpiſed and rejected of men —he was deſpiſed and we eſteemed him not,* was ſaid of our Lord himſelf; and can this condition then in juſt eſteem be ſo very pitiful or grievous? Pſal. 22. 6, 7. 1 Cor. 4. 12, 13. Iſa. 53. 3.

But thou art perhaps troubled becauſe thou art wrongfully cenſured, odiouſly traduced and defamed, abuſed by ſlander, or by detraction; which aſperſeth thee with things whereof thou art no-wiſe guilty, or repreſenteth thee in a character unworthy of thee: Be it ſo; what then; why doth this ſo much affect thee?

Exempl. Jeremiæ. Chryſoſt. *ad* Olymp. 16.

Gratias ago Deo meo, quod dignus ſum quem mundus oderit. Hier. *Ep.* 39. (*ad* Aſellam.)

Is not every man ſubject to theſe things? are not the greateſt men, are not the wiſeſt men, are not the beſt men liable to the ſame? yea chiefly liable, excellency being the ſpecial mark of envy and obloquy? can any good men eſcape free of them among ſo many bad men, whoſe doings as goodneſs doth reproach, ſo it provoketh their malignity? Canſt thou imagine to paſs thy days in ſo unjuſt and ſpiteful a World without incurring ſuch bad uſage; can ſo many vain, ſo many bold, ſo many lawleſs, tongues be tied up, or kept within compaſs of truth, or equity? Wilt thou ſuffer it to be in the power of any man at his pleaſure ſo eaſily to diſcompoſe and vex thee? becauſe he will be bad, ſhalt thou be miſerable? why doſt thou not rather pleaſe thy ſelf in the conſcience of thy endeavouring to deſerve and do well; in thy innocence, and clearneſs from the blame which they impoſe on thee; in thy having given no cauſe of ſuch offence and outrage? why doſt thou not rather pity their unworthineſs and unhappineſs, who ſtoop to ſo mean and baſe practices, than fret at them, as bad to thee? they do themſelves far more miſchief, than they can do thee.

Ἀλλ' οἱ μὲν ἠδίκησαν, ἐγὼ δ' οὐκ ἠδίκημαι. Theod. *Ep.* 80.

And why doſt thou not conſider, that indeed thou art guilty of many faults, and full of real imperfections, ſo that no man can eaſily derogate from thee more than thou deſerveſt: he may indeed tax thee unjuſtly, he may miſs in the particulars of his charge, he may diſcover groundleſs contempt, and ill-will toward thee; but thou knoweſt thy ſelf to be a grievous ſinner, and it is juſt that thou ſhouldſt be reproached, (God, for thy humiliation, or thy correction, may have ordered him, as *David* ſaid he might have ordered *Shimei, to curſe* thee) thou haſt therefore more need to be humble in reflection on thy ſelf, than to ſwell with diſdain in regard to his injury.

Thou ſhouldſt improve this dealing, and make it wholeſome to thee, by taking occaſion thence to correct thy real faults, and endeavouring to become truly more worthy; that ſo thy conſcience may be a firm bulwark againſt all detraction and obloquy: In fine, ſatisfie thy ſelf by *committing thy ſoul with patience in well-doing* unto thy Judge, who aſſuredly will do thee right, will protect thy reputation, and clear thy innocence: his judgment is onely worth regarding, be little concerned with any other.

Theodor. *Ep.* 83.

Again, Being diſappointed and croſſed in the ſucceſs of their projects, or undertakings, is wont to put men, as they conceive, into a woful caſe: but why ſo? why (let me ask thee, who art diſcontented upon this ſcore) didſt thou build much expectation upon uncertainties? didſt thou not foreſee a poſſibility, that thy deſign might miſcarry, and if ſo, why art thou not prepared to receive what happeneth? was it not an adventure, why then art thou troubled with thy chance? Is he not a ſilly gameſter, that will fret and fume at a bad caſt, or at the loſs of a game? didſt thou refer the buſineſs to God's diſpoſal and arbitrement? if not, thou deſervedſt to be croſſed, and rather confeſs thy fault, than complain of thy fortune; if thou didſt ſo, then be conſiſtent with thy ſelf, and acquieſce in his determination: In fine, what is thy loſs, is't of thy care and pain? would it have been much better, that thou hadſt been careleſs or idle? but haſt thou not in lieu of them got ſome Wiſdom and Experience? haſt thou not (if thy attempt was reaſonable and worthy) exerciſed thy Wit, thy courage, thy induſtry? haſt thou not (by thy defeat) got an opportunity to expreſs equanimity and patience? if thou ſo improveſt thy diſappointment, thou art a gainer by thy loſs, thou *doſt more than conquer* by thy defeat: however ſince the gain, the credit, the preferment thou didſt aim at, and haſt miſſed, are things in themſelves of no great value, and ſuch as thou maieſt well live without, as other good men have done, thou canſt not have much reaſon to be diſpleaſed upon this accompt, or to reckon thy condition diſaſtrous.

But friends, will ſome ſay, have been unkind, have been ungrateful, have been fickle and falſe, have neglected, have deſerted, have betrayed me; *It was not an enemy, that reproached me, then I could have born it*, &c. this is indeed commonly moſt grievous; yet being ſcanned will not render a man's condition ſo lamentable: for, ſuch misbehaviour of friends is more their calamity than ours: the loſs of bad friends is no damage, but an advantage; 'tis but the loſs of a miſchief, and a trouble: the fewer we come to have of ſuch, the more time we ſave, the leſs trouble we meet with, the greater ſecurity we enjoy. The kindneſs we have ſhewed, the obligations we have put on ſuch, are not quite loſt, they will bring the rewards due to humanity and fidelity; it will yeild ſatisfaction to us, that however we have been kind and faithful to them. The fidelity of remaining true friends may ſatisfie us; however if all other friendſhip ſhould fail, there is one remains, worth millions of other friends, who can never prove unfaithful, or inconſtant, who never will be unmindful of us, or deficient in kindneſs toward us.

Pſal. 55. 7.

Jam ſibi pœnas dedit qui peccavit. Sen. *de Gr.* 2. 30.

The death of friends doth it may be oppreſs thee with ſorrow.

Vid. Sen. *Ep.* 63.

But canſt thou loſe thy beſt friend; canſt thou loſe the preſence, the converſation, the protection, the advice, the ſuccour of God? is he not immortal, is he not immutable, is he not inſeparable from thee? canſt thou be deſtitute of friends, whilſt he ſtands by thee? Is it not an affront, an heinous indignity to him, to behave thy ſelf, as if thy happineſs

Οὐ γὰρ ἀπέδωκεν ὁ πάντα δεῖται ἐκείνῳ ἀνὴρ χρὴ τὴν τῆς Κυρίας φωνὴν, ἀλλὰ καθεύδειν ὕπνον τὸ συνήθως μακρότερον. Theod. *Ep.* 68.

Ἀποδημίαν τίνυν παρεγκαλῶ μακρὰν τὴν πλάτην. &c. Theod. *Ep.* 16.

happineſs, thy welfare, thy comfort had dependence on any other but him? is it not a great fault to be unwilling to part with any thing, when he calleth for it? *Vid.* Greg. Naz. *Ep.* 202.

Neither is it a loſs of thy friend, but a ſeparation for a ſmall time; he is onely parted from thee as taking a little journey, or going for a ſmall time to repoſe; within a while we ſhall be ſure to meet again, and joyfully to congratulate, if we are fit, in a better place, and more happy ſtate; *præmiſimus, non amiſimus*; we have ſent him thither before, not quite loſt him from us.

Cur dolet ſi periiſſe non credis? cur impatienter ferat ſubductum interim quem credis reverſurum? profectio eſt quam putas mortem. Tert. *de Pat.* 9. Sen. *Ep.* 63.

Thy friend, if he be a good man (and in ſuch friendſhips onely we can have true ſatisfaction) is himſelf in no bad condition, and doth not want thee; thou canſt not therefore reaſonably grieve for him; and to grieve onely for thy ſelf is perverſe ſelfiſhneſs and fondneſs.

Impatientia in ejuſmodi & ſpei noſtræ male ominatur, & fidem prævaricatur, &c. Tert. *ibid.*

Πῶς τὸ τ' ἀγάπης ἀγλαὸν, ἑαυτῷ τὰ ῥάω δίδοντα τῷ φιλτάτου ἐστέρημεν τὰ ἀμείνονα; Naz. *Or.* 19.

But thou haſt loſt a great comfort of thy life, and advantage to thy affairs here? is it truly ſo? is it indeed an irreparable loſs, even ſecluding the conſideration of God, whoſe friendſhip repaireth all poſſible loſs? what is it, I pray, that was pleaſant, convenient, or uſeful to thee in thy friend, which may not in good meaſure be ſupplied here? was it a ſenſe of hearty good-will, was it a ſweet freedom of converſation, was it ſound advice or kind aſſiſtence in thy affairs? and mayſt thou not find thoſe left, which are alike able, and willing to miniſter thoſe benefits? may not the ſame means, which knit him to thee conciliate others alſo to be thy friends? he did not alone ſurely poſſeſs all the good nature, all the fidelity, all the Wiſdom in the World, nor hath carried them all away with him? other friends therefore thou mayſt find to ſupply his room: all good men will be ready, if thou art good, to be thy friends, they will heartily love thee; they will be ready to chear thee with their ſweet and wholeſome ſociety, to yeild thee their beſt counſel and help upon any occaſion: Is it not therefore a fond and unaccountable affection to a kind of perſonality, rather than want of a real convenience that diſturbeth thee? *Vid.* Sen. *Ep.* 63.

In fine, the ſame reaſons, which in any other loſs may comfort us, ſhould do it alſo in this: neither a friend nor any other good thing we can enjoy is under any ſecurity of not ſoon loſing it; our welfare is not annexed to one man no more than to any other inferiour thing; this is the condition of all good things here to be tranſient and ſeparable from us; and accordingly we ſhould be affected toward them.

Fragile fractum eſt, mortale mortuum eſt.

But farther, it perphaps diſpleaſeth us, that the courſe of the World doth not go right, or according to our mind; that juſtice is not well diſpenſed, that vertue is under hatches, that worth is not conſidered, that induſtry is not rewarded, that innocence and modeſty are trampled upon; that favour, partiality, corruption, flattery, craft, impudence do carry all before them; devouring all the encouragement due to honeſt induſtry: This may be obſerved, but why ſhould it diſpleaſe? art thou guilty of contributing to this? then mend; if not, then bear; eſpecially ſeeing thou canſt not help it; for ſo it hath always been, and ever will be in the World, that things never have gone there as the wiſeſt judge, or the beſt men deſire: there have never been good men enough to ſway the World, nor will the few good men that are, be ſo active in promoting publick good, as bad are in driving on their private deſigns; doth not this courſe

of things neceſſarily ſpring from the nature of men, which therefore we ſhould no more be vexed at, than for that a Serpent hath poiſon, or that a Waſp hath a ſting? we cannot wonder at it, why then ſhould we be ſtrangely affected by it? could any man ever have been pleaſed, if this were a ſufficient cauſe of diſpleaſure? However the World goes, we may yet make a tolerable ſhift, God is engaged competently to provide for us; that ſhould ſatisfie us. God obſerveth theſe things no leſs than we, and he can eaſily hinder them, yet he thinketh good to ſuffer them; and ſhall not we do ſo likewiſe? there is in fine appointed a judgment hereafter, when all theſe things ſhall be redreſſed and ſet ſtreight; when juſtice and vertue ſhall triumph, when integrity and induſtry ſhall find their due recompence, 'tis but a moment to that time, and till then we may reſt ſatisfied.

Thus if we do ſurvey and rightly ſtate things, which cauſe diſcontent, and ſeem to render our condition hard and ſad, we ſhall find, that not from the things, but from our ſelves all the miſchief proceeds: We by our imagination give to the lighteſt things a Weight, and ſwell the ſmalleſt things into a vaſt bulk; we fancy them very frightful and doleful, then we tremble and grieve at them. Mere names (the names of poverty, of diſgrace, of defeat) do ſcare us, without conſulting reaſon, and conſidering how little terrible the things are themſelves. We follow ſilly prejudices, judging that highly good, which the vulgar admire, that very evil, which the weakeſt ſort of men are wont to complain of; hence ſo commonly doth our caſe ſeem grievous. But in truth there is no condition ſo bad, but if we manage it well and wiſely, if we bend our mind to comply with it, if we moderate our paſſions about the accidents thereof, if we vigilantly embrace and enjoy the advantages thereof, may not be eaſily ſupportable, yea prove very comfortable to us; it is our fond conceits, our froward humours, our perverſe behaviours, which do create the trouble, which ſeemeth adherent to any condition, and embittereth every ſtate; which from any ſlight occaſion doth create vexation, and turneth every event into diſaſter.

2. As there is no condition here perfectly and purely good (not deficient in ſome conveniences, not blended with ſome troubles) ſo there is none ſo throughly bad, that it hath not ſomewhat convenient and comfortable therein; ſeldom or never all good things do forſake a man at once, or all miſchiefs together aſſail him; ſomewhat uſually abideth, which well improved, or wiſely enjoyed may ſatisfy a man, yea render his eſtate comparable to theirs, who to vulgar eyes appear to be in the beſt condition: there is in every condition ſomewhat of good compenſating for its evils, and reducing it to a balance with other more plauſible ſtates. We are, ſuppoſe again, in poverty, (that inſtance I propound uſually, as the moſt ordinary ground of diſcontent) but have we therewith good health? then moſt rich men may envy us, and reaſonably we ſhould not exchange our ſtate with many crazy Princes: have we therewith our liberty? that is an ineſtimable good which often times the greateſt men have wanted, and would have purchaſed with heaps of gold: have we therein a quiet mind, and a free uſe of our time? It is that, which wiſeſt men have prized above any Wealth, and which the chief men of the World would be glad to taſt of: have we a clear reputation? we have then the beſt good that any Wealth can yeild, we have more than

——uſque adeo nulla eſt ſincera voluptas,
Salicitique aliquid lætis intervenit——
Ovid.

Aſſueſcendum conditioni ſuæ; & quam minimum de illa querendum, & quicquid habet circa ſe commodi apprehendendum eſt: nihil tam acerbum eſt, ex quo non æquus animus ſolatium inveniat. Sen. *de Tranq. an. cap.* 10.

than many can obrain in the moſt ſplendid fortune: have we any friends ſticking to us? that is more than the richeſt perſons can aſſure themſelves of, to whom it is near impoſſible to diſtinguiſh the friends of their perſons from the flatterers of their fortune; it is a privilege and ſolace, which Princes are hardly capable to arrive at: have we a bare competency, ſufficient to maintain our life? we thereby keep our appetites in better compaſs, and our faculties in greater vigour; we thence better reliſh all things; we in conſequence thereof avoid the burthens, the diſeaſes, the vices of ſloth and luxury: have we farther (as if we are not very bad, we ſhall in this caſe aſſuredly have, humanity diſpoſing all men thereto) the compaſſion of men; is not this ſomewhat better, than that envy, that ill-will, that obloquy, which uſually do attend Wealth and Proſperity? why then, if our poor eſtate hath ſo manifold conveniencies, do we ſo much diſtaſt it? why do we ſo dwell and pore on the ſmall inconveniences we feel under it, overlooking, or ſlighting the benefits we may enjoy thereby? This indeed ordinarily is our folly and infirmity? that the want of any little thing, which we fancy or affect, doth hinder us, from ſatisfaction in all other things; *One dead fly* cauſeth all our *ointment to ſtink*; the poſſeſſion of a Kingdom will not keep us from being *heavy and diſpleaſed* (as *Ahab* was) if we cannot acquire a ſmall vineyard near us; on that one thing our head runs continually, our heart is wholly ſet, we can think on, we can taſt nothing elſe; the want of that notwithſtanding all our affluence doth pinch us, our dainties thence doth prove inſipid, our ſplendours appear dim, every thing but that is a toy unto us: So capriciouſly, and unaccomptably prone are we to diſcontent.

Prov. 27. 7. Eccleſ. 10. 1. 1 Kings 21. 1.

3. Is our condition (let me ask again) ſo extreamly bad, that it cannot be much worſe? Are we ſunk to the bottom of all calamity? No ſurely; God's Providence will not ſuffer, the ſtate of things here can never admit that to be: here are ſuccours always ready againſt extremities; our own Wit and Induſtry, the help of relations or friends, the natural pity and charity of our neighbours will preſerve us from them; eſpecially perſons in any meaſure innocent can never come near them; there will therefore never fail ſome good matter of content in what remains; a few good things, well improved, may greatly ſolace us; but however, let us imagine our caſe to be the worſt that can be; that a confluence of all temporal miſchiefs and wants hath arrived, that we are utterly bereaved of all the comforts this World afforded; that we are ſtripped of all our Wealth, quite ſunk in our reputation, deſerted of every friend, deprived of our health and our liberty; that all the loſſes, all the diſgraces, all the pains which poor *Job* ſuſtained, or far more and greater than thoſe have together ſeiſed on us; yet we cannot have ſufficient reaſon to be diſcontent; for that nevertheleſs we have goods left to us in our hands, or within our reach, far ſurpaſſing all thoſe goods we have loſt, much outweighing the evils we do undergo: When the World hath done its worſt, we remain Maſters of things incomparably better than it, and all it containeth; the poſſeſſion whereof may, and (if we be wiſe) will abundantly ſatisfie us. We are men ſtill, and have our reaſon left behind, which alone, in worth, exceedeth all the treaſures of the World; in well uſing which, and thereby ordering all things for the beſt, we become more worthy, and more happy than the moſt fortunate fool on earth; we may therein find more true ſatisfaction, than any Wealth, or any Glory here can miniſter: We may have a good conſcience left, (the ſenſe of having lived well heretofore, or at leaſt a ſerious reſolution to live well hereafter) and

Job, who ἐκέκτητο αὐτῷ (τῷ Διαβόλῳ) βελοδηκλων ἅπασαν κατεξιόμβῳ δὲ αὐτῷ, &c. Chryſ. *ad* Olymp. 2.

that

Prov. 15. 15. that is a *continual feaſt*, yeilding a far more ſolid and ſavoury pleaſure, than the moſt ample revenue can afford: We may have hope in God (the authour and donour of all good things) and thereby far greater aſſurance of our convenient ſubſiſtence and welfare, than all preſent poſſeſſions can beſtow; we have reſerved a free acceſs to the throne of Grace, and thereby a ſure means (grounded on God's infallible word and promiſe) of obtaining whatever is good for us; we have a firm right to innumerable ſpiritual bleſſings and privileges, each of them juſtly valuable beyond whole worlds of pelf; we can, in a word (we can if we pleaſe) enjoy God's favour, which immenſly tranſcendeth all other enjoyments, which vaſtly more than countervaileth the abſence of all other things; of this, by applying our ſelves to the love and ſervice of God, we are infallibly capable; of this no worldly force or fortune can diſpoil us; we having this, our condition cannot be poor, contemptible or pitiful; 'tis indeed thereby moſt rich, glorious and happy: For how can he be poor that hath the Lord of all things always ready to ſupply him; who hath *God* (as the *Pſalmiſt* is wont to ſpeak) to be *his portion for ever*? How can he be deſpicable, that hath the honour to have the Sovereign Majeſty of the World for his eſpecial friend? How can he be miſerable who enjoyeth the fountain of all happineſs, who hath *the light of God's countenance* to cheer him, who hath the conſolations of God's holy Spirit to refreſh and revive him? What can he want, who, beſide his preſent intereſt in all the needful effects of God's bountiful love, is an Heir of Heaven and everlaſting bliſs? Seeing therefore it is in our power to be religious, ſeeing we may, if we will (God's grace concurring, which preventeth us to ſeek, which never is withheld from thoſe who ſeek it) be good Chriſtians; ſeeing nothing can hinder us from fearing God, or can *ſeparate us from his love*, neither can any thing render our condition bad or unhappy, really diſtreſſed or needy: *O fear the Lord* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*) *for there is no want to them that ſeek him*: *The young Lions* (or the rich, as the LXX. render it) *do lack and ſuffer hunger*; *but they that ſeek the Lord ſhall not want any good thing*; and, *Whoſo keepeth the commandment, ſhall feel no evil thing*, ſaith the *Wiſeman*; and, *The hand of our God is upon all them that ſeek him*, ſaith the *Prophet*; and, *Who is he that ſhall harm you*; (or do ill to you, or make you worſe) *if ye be followers of that which is good*? ſaith St. *Peter*; and, *We know* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *that to them who love God all things cooperate for good*; and *Godlineſs* (ſaith he again) *with contentedneſs is great gain*; that is, ſuppoſing we have the goods which piety miniſtreth, although we have nothing more, we are, if we can be content, very well to paſs; it is abundantly ſufficient for us.

Rom. 8. 39.
Pſal. 34. 9.
Πλούσιοι ἐπτώχευσαν. LXX.
Eccleſ. 8. 5.
Ezra 8. 22.
1 Pet. 3. 13.
Ὁ κακώσων.
Rom. 8. 28.
1 Tim. 6. 6.

Why then, I pray, are we diſcontent? what doe we groan or grieve for? What is it that we do want? is it the uſe of reaſon, is it vertue, is it God's favour? then indeed we have good cauſe to be diſpleaſed; for the want of thoſe things is indeed lamentable; but if we do want them, it is onely our ſelves that we ſhould complain of; for we may have them if we will, and who can help it if we will not? Who, if we ſhall wilfully deprive our ſelves of them, will be concerned to mind our complaints? But is it onely a lump of traſh, or a puff of honour, or a flaſh of pleaſure, that we do need? Is it that we cannot ſo delicately glut our bellies, or ſo finely cloath our backs, or ſo throughly ſooth our fancies, as we could wiſh, that we ſo pitifully moan? Is it being reſtrained in ſome reſpects from the ſwinge of our humour, is it that we are not ſo much regarded, or are ſlighted by ſome perſons, is it that we are croſſed

crossed in some design, that so discomposeth and discourageth us? then are we sottishly fond and childish in our conceits, and our affections: for proper it is to children, when as they want no solid or substantial goods, to wail for worthless toies and trinkets; 'tis for children, when they have not their will in petty and impertinent matters, to cry and lament; children are much affected with every Word, or little shew that crosseth them; If we were (as St. *Paul* chargeth us to be) *perfect men*, if we had manly judgments, and manly affections toward things, we should not so regard or value any of these temporal and transitory things, either good or evil, as by the want of one sort, or by the presence of the other, to be much disturbed; we should, with St. *Paul*, style any present evil τὸ ἐλαφρὸν τῆς θλίψεως, *a lightness of affliction*: We should with him reckon, *that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glories which shall be revealed to us*: We should with St. *Peter greatly rejoyce, though for a season we are in heaviness, through manifold trials*, or afflictions: We should esteem any condition here very tolerable, yea very good.

1 Cor. 14. 20.

2 Cor. 4. 17. Rom. 8. 18.

1 Pet. 1. 6.

4. In truth (if we will not mince the matter, and can bear a truth sounding like a Paradox) usually our condition is then better, when it seemeth worse; then we have most cause to be glad when we are apt est to grieve; then we should be thankful, when we do complain; that it appeareth otherwise to us, it is because in our taxations of things we do ordinarily judge (or rather not judge, but fancy, not hearing or regarding any dictate of reason) like beasts; prizing things merely according to present sense, or shew, not examining their intrinsick natures, or looking forward into their proper fruits and consequences.

Adversity (or a state, wherein we are not furnished with all accommodations grateful to sense or fancy; or wherein somewhat doth cleave to us offensive to those inferiour powers of soul) is the thing which we chiefly loath and abominate; whereas, in true judgment, nothing commonly is more necessary, more wholesome, more useful and beneficial to us; nothing is more needful, or conducible to the health of our soul, and to our real happiness, than it: It is the School of Wisdom, wherein our minds are disciplined and improved in the knowledge of the best things, whence it is termed παιδεία, that is, instructive chastisement; * so *David* found it, *It is*, said he, *good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes*; and, our *Lord* himself, ἔμαθεν ἀφ' ὧν ἔπαθε, *He learned obedience from what he suffered*. It is the *Academy* wherein vertue is acquired and exercised; so God meant it to his people; *The Lord thy God* (saith *Moses*) *led thee this forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble thee, and prove thee*. So the *Wiseman* saith, that *by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better*; and, *that stripes do cleanse the inward parts of the belly*. And, *It yeildeth* (saith the *Apostle*) *the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby*.

———multoque in rebus acerbis
Acrius advertunt animos ad religionem.
Lucret. 3. p. 64.

Καὶ γὰρ τὸ πῦρ οὐδεὶς παῦσαι, καὶ τὸν ῥᾳδιουργίαν ἐκκόπτει πᾶσαν ἡ θλῖψις, καὶ πρὸς ὑπομονὴν ἀλείφει καὶ καλύπτει τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης πράγματων τὸ ἀτέλειαν, καὶ πολλῶν εἰσάγει τὴν φιλοσοφίαν, &c. Chry. *in* 2 Cor. *Orat.* 26.

* Psal. 119. 71. 1 Cor. 11. 32. Κεκύμωνται ὑπὸ χειρὸς παιδευόμεθα. Heb. 5. 8.

Miseris tu, si Deus, ille bonorum amantissimus qui illos quam optimos esse atque excellentissimos vult, fortunam illis cum qua exerceantur assignat? Sen. *de Prov.* 2. Deut. 8. 2.

Eccles. 7. 3. Prov. 20. 30. Heb. 12. 11. Jam. 1. 3. Rom. 5. 3.

It is the furnace of the soul wherein it is tryed, cleansed and refined from the dross of vain conceits, of perverse humours, of vitious distempers: *When* (saith *Job*) *he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold*: and, *Gold* (saith the *Wiseman*) *is tried in the fire, and acceptable men in the furnace of* * *adversity*.

Job 23. 10. (Psal. 66. 10.) Eccles. 2. 5. Sap. 3. 5. (Isa. 1. 25. 48. 10. Mal. 3. 23. Dan. 11. 35.)

* Hence πειρασμὸς (trial) is the usual word signifying it. 1 Pet. 1. 6, &c.

It

It is the method whereby God reclaimeth ſturdy ſinners to goodneſs, engageth them to ſeek and ſerve himſelf; ſo of the *Iſraelites*, the *Prophet* ſaith, *Lord in trouble have they viſited thee, they poured out a prayer when thy chaſtening was upon them*; ſo *Manaſſes*, *when he was in affliction he beſought the Lord his God, and humbled himſelf greatly before the God of his Fathers*; ſo *Nebuchadnezzar*, after being driven from his Kingdom, *his underſtanding returned unto him, and he bleſſed the moſt high, and praiſed and honoured him that liveth for ever*: So *David* himſelf, *Before*, ſaid he, *I was afflicted I went aſtray, but now have I kept thy Word.*

Iſa. 26. 16. 29. 19. Hoſ. 5. 15. Pſal. 78. 34. 107. 4, &c. 88. 16. 2 Chron 2. 3. 12. Dan. 3. 34. Pſal. 119. 67.

Ἡ δὲ θλῖψις πόνων ἐπίτασις μισθῶν ἐπίτασις ἐστὶ καὶ ἔρεισμα ἀσφαλὲς πρὸς τὸ μὴ ἐκπίπτειν καὶ τὸ πῶρον καταστέλλει καὶ ῥαθυμίαν ἀποστρέφει καὶ φρονιμωτέρους ποιεῖ καὶ ἀλαζονείας ἐργάζεται, &c. Chryſ. Hom. 6. Or. 5.

* 2 Cor. 4. 17.

Heb. 10. 36. ὑπομονῆς ἔχετε χρείαν &c.

1 Pet. 1. 6. 4. 14.

It is that whereby God doth prepare men, and doth entitle them to the bleſſed rewards hereafter: *Our light affliction* (ſaith * *St. Paul*) *which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*; and, *Ye* (ſaith St. *Peter*) *greatly rejoice, though now for a ſeaſon, if need be, ye are in heavineſs through manifold temptations, that the trial of your faith, being much more pretious than of gold that periſheth, though it be tried with fire, may be found unto praiſe, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jeſus Chriſt.* Such is the nature, ſuch the uſe, ſuch the fruits of adverſity.

Nihil infelicius eo, cui nihil unquam evenit adverſi, non licuit enim illi ſe experiri. Sen. *de Provid.* 3.

Non ſert ullum ictum illæſa fælicitas. Ibid.

It is indeed ſcarce poſſible, that without taſting it ſomewhat deeply, any man ſhould become in good meaſure either wiſe or good. He muſt be very ignorant of himſelf (of his own temper and inclinations, of the ſtrength and forces of his reaſon) who hath not met with ſome rubs and croſſes to try himſelf and them with: the greater part of things he muſt little underſtand, who hath not experienced the worſt part: he cannot skill to weild and govern his paſſions, who never had them ſtirred up, and toſſed about by croſs accidents: he can be no good Pilot in matters of humane life, who hath not for ſome time ſailed in a rough Sea, in foul Weather, among ſands and ſhelves: he could have no good opportunity of employing throughly, or improving his Wit, his courage, his induſtry, who hath had no ſtraits to extricate himſelf from, no difficulties to ſurmount, no hardſhips to ſuſtain: The vertues of humility, of patience, of contentedneſs neceſſarily muſt be unknown to him, to whom no diſgraces, no wants, no ſore pains have arrived, by well enduring which, thoſe vertues are learnt, and planted in the Soul: Scarce can he become very charitable, or compaſſionate to others, who never himſelf hath felt the ſmart of affliction, or inconveniences of any diſtreſs; for even, as the *Apoſtle* teacheth us, our Saviour himſelf was obliged *to ſuffer tribulation*, that he thence might become *merciful*, and *diſpoſed to ſuccour the afflicted.* (No wonder, if he *that liveth in* continual *proſperity*, be a *Nabal*, churliſh and diſcourteous, inſenſible of other mens grievances:) And how can he expreſs much piety or love to God, who is not (in ſubmiſſion to God's Will, and for his ſake) put to ſuffer any thing grievous, or want any thing deſirable? When can he employ any great faith or hope in God, who never hath any viſible need of ſuccour, or relief from him, who hath other preſent aids to confide in? How can he purely delight in God, and place his ſole felicity in him? Hovv can he throughly reliſh ſpiritual things, vvhoſe affections are taken up by an affluence of other goods, vvhoſe

* *Quæ latet, inque bonis ceſſat non cognita rebus,*
Apparet virtus, arguiturque malis.
Ovid. *Triſt.* 4. 3.

Non ignara mali miſeris ſuccurrere diſco.* Æn. 2.

Cum moleſtiæ in hujus vitæ fragilitate crebriſcunt, æternam requiem nos diſiderare compellunt. Mundus quippe iſte periculoſior eſt blandus, quam moleſtus, & magis cavendus quum ſe illicit diligi, quam cum admonet, cogitque contemni. Aug. *Ep.* 144.

whoſe appetites are glutted with enjoyment of other delights? What but deprivation of theſe things can lay open the vanity, the deceitfulneſs and ſlipperineſs of them? What but croſſes and diſappointments here can withdraw our minds from a fond admiration, and eager affection toward this World? What but the want of theſe joys and ſatisfactions, can drive us to ſeek our felicity otherwhere? when *the deceit of riches* poſſeſſeth us, How can we judge right of things? when cares about them diſtract us, How can we think about any thing that is good? when their ſnares entangle us, and their clogs encumber us, How can we be free and expedite in doing good? when abundance fatneth our hearts, and eaſe ſoftneth our ſpirits, and ſucceſs puffeth up our minds; when pride, ſenſuality, ſtupidity and ſloth (the moſt inſeparable adherents to large and proſperous Eſtates) do continually inſinuate themſelves into us, What Wiſdom, what Vertue are we like to have?

Ardua res est opibus non tradere mores. Mart.

Munera ista fortunæ putatis? insidiæ sunt. Sen. *Ep.* 8.

Viscata beneficia. Ib.

Matt. 13. 22. 1 Tim. 6. 9. Luc. 10. 41. Deut. 32. 15. Prov. 1. 32. 30. 9. Hoſ. 13. 6. Pſal. 30. 6. Jer. 22. 21. Amos 6. 1, &c.

Seeing then adverſity is ſo wholeſom and uſeful, the remedy of ſo great miſchiefs, the cauſe of ſo great benefits to us, Why ſhould we be diſpleaſed therewith? to be diſpleaſed with it, is to be diſpleaſed with that which is moſt needful, or moſt convenient for us, to be diſpleaſed with the health and welfare of our Souls; that we are reſcued from errours and vices, with all their black trains of miſeries and wickedneſs; to be diſpleaſed that we are not detained under the reign of folly and miſchief, that we are not inevitably made fools and beaſts. To be diſguſted with providence for affliction or poverty, is no other than as if we ſhould be angry with our Phyſician for adminiſtring a purge, or for preſcribing abſtinence to us; as if we ſhould fret at our Chirurgion for ſearching our Wounds, or applying needful corroſives; as if we ſhould complain of the hand which draweth us from a precipice, or *pulleth us out of the fire*. *Many benefits* (ſaith *Seneca*) *have a ſad and rough countenance, as to burn and cut in order to healing*: Such a benefit of God is adverſity to us; and as ſuch with a gladſome and thankful mind ſhould we receive it.

Gratulari & gaudere nos decet dignatione divinæ castigationis — O servum illum beatum, cujus emendationi Dominus instat; cui dignatur irasci, quem admonendi dissimulatione non decipit. Tert. *de Pat.* 11.

Ὁ ἁμαρτάνων γὰρ μὴ κολαζόμενος, πάντων ἔξω ἀθλιότητος, &c. Chryſ. ἀνδρ.

Ἡ νοσούντων ἰατρεῖαι, ἢ ὑγιαινόντων γυμνάσιαι Simpl.

Κρείττων δ' ἡμείας ἀχαλινώτου νόσος φιλόσοφος. Naz. *Ep.* 66.

Jude 23.

Beneficia multa tristem & asperam frontem habent, quemadmodum urere, & secare, ut sanes. Sen. *de Benef.* 5. 20.

If with a diligent obſervation we conſult experience, we ſhall find, that as many have great cauſe to bewail, that they have been rich, that they have been blinded and corrupted with proſperity, that they have *received their conſolation here*; ſo many have great reaſon to be glad, that they have been poor, that they have been diſappointed, that they have taſted the bitter cup; it having inſtructed and corrected them; it having rendred them ſober and conſiderate; induſtrious and frugal, mindful of God, and devout toward him: And what we may rejoice in, when paſt, Why ſhould we not bear contentedly when preſent? Why ſhould not the expectation of ſuch good fruits ſatisfie us?

Horrorem operis fructus excusat. Tert. *Scorp.* 5.

Luke 6. 24. Jam. 5. 1. Amos 6. 1, &c.

Let our condition be what it will, we are the ſame. It doth not change us in our intrinſick worth, or ſtate. It is but a garment about us, or as weather.

——— *Ego utrum*
Nave ferar magna an parva, ferar unus & idem. Hor. *Epiſt.* 2. 3.

Why ſhould not ſuch a condition, being ſo plainly better in it ſelf, ſeem alſo better unto us? We cannot, if we are reaſonable, but approve it in our judgment; Why then are we not fully reconciled unto it in our affection?

SERMON VIII.

Of Contentment.

PHIL. 4. 11.

I have learned in whatsoever state, &c.

5. BUut farther; Let our state be, as to quality, what it will, good or bad, joyful or unpleasant, we may yet consider, that it cannot be desperate, it may not be lasting; for there is not any necessary connexion between the present and the future; wherefore, as the present being momentany and transient, can little trouble us, so the future being unknown, and uncertain, should not dismay us. As no man reasonably can be elevated with confidence in a good state, presuming on its duration, (*Boast not thy self of to morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth*;) so no man should be dejected for a bad one, in suspicion that it will abide long; seeing neither (considering the frequent vicissitudes that occur, and the flux nature of all things here) is each of them in it self, stable; and the continuance of each absolutely dependeth on God's arbitrary disposal; and as God often doth overturn prosperity, to humane judgment most firmly grounded, so he most easily can redress the to appearance most forelorn adversity; and he, being especially *the helper of the helpless*, doth frequently perform it: *As he poureth contempt upon Princes, and weakeneth the strength of the mighty*; so *he raiseth the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghil: He casteth down the mighty from their seat, and exalteth the humble and meek: He sendeth the rich empty away, and filleth the hungry with good things. He maketh sore, and bindeth up, he woundeth, and his hands make whole.*

Prov. 27. 1.

Multa intervenient quibus vicinum periculum vel prope admotum aut subsistat aut desinat, aut in alienum caput transiat. Sen.

Psal. 72. 12. 107. 9. 10. 4. 106. 9. Job 12. 21. Psal. 107. 40. Isa. 25. 5. Job 5. 11. Isa. 2. 11. Psal. 18. 27. Psal. 113. 7. 107. 41. Job. 5. 18. 1 Sam. 2. 7.

Considering therefore the reason of things, and the nature of God, if our state be at present bad or sorrowful, we have more reason to hope for its amendment, than to fear its continuance. If indeed things vvent on in a fatal track, meerly according to a blind and heedless chance, or a stiff and unalterable necessity; if there vvere no remedy from God's providence, or support by his grace to be expected (although even then there vvould be no reason to grieve or complain; grief vvould be unreasonable because unprofitable, complaint vvould be vain, because fortune and fate are deaf) yet our infirmity might somevvhat excuse that idle proceeding; but since *not a Sparrow falleth to the ground, not a hair of our head perisheth*; nothing at

Τοῖς γὰρ ἔχουσι καὶ σώφροσι λογισμὸς εὐχερισθῆναι οὐκ ἐᾷ ἐπ' ἀνθρώποις ἀδοκήτοις, οὐδὲν γὰρ τούτων σαθρὸν ἢ βέβαιον, &c. Theod. *Ep.* 14.

Sperat adversis, metuit secundis,
Alteram sortem bene præparatum pectus.
Hor. *Carm.* 2. 10.

Mat. 10. 29, 30. Luke 21. 18.

at all passeth otherwise, than by the voluntary disposition of a most wise and gratious God; since he doth always strictly view, and is very sensible of our griefs; yea doth in a manner sympathize with them (according to those pathetical expressions in the Prophets; *His bowels sound*; and *are troubled, his heart is turned within him*; *In all their afflictions he was afflicted.*) Since he farther hath by promise obliged himself to *care for us*, to support, and succour us; we have all reason to hope, yea firmly to believe (if at least we can find in our hearts to hope and to believe) that we shall, as soon as it is good and expedient for us, find relief and ease; we shall have that εὔκαιρον βοήθειαν, that *seasonable succour*, of which the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* speaketh.

Hos. 11. 8. Jer. 31. 20. Isa. 63. 9, 15. Luc. 12. 29, 31. Heb. 13. 5. Matt. 6. 33. Phil. 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 7. Psal. 55. 23. 37. 5. Heb. 4. 6.

Hope lieth at the bottom of the worst condition that can be; *The poor* (saith *Job*'s friend) *hath hope*; and the rich can have no more; the future being equally close to both; the one can have no greater assurance to keep what he hath, than the other hath to get what he needeth; yea clearly the poor hath the advantage in the case; for God hath more declared, that he will relieve the poor man's want, than that he will preserve the rich man's store: If then we have in every condition a hope present to us, Why do we *grieve as those who have no hope*? having ever ready the best anchor that can be to rest upon (for in this rolling Sea of humane affairs, there is no firmer anchor than hope) Why do we let our minds be tossed with discontentful solicitudes and fears? Why do we not rather (as the *Apostle* injoineth) *rejoice in hope*, than grieve out of despair? Why do we not as the *Prophet* adviseth, *hope and wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord*? the effect of so reposing our selves for the future on God's Providence would be perfect content, and peace, according to that of the *Prophet*, *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed in thee, because he trusteth in thee*; And that of the *Wise-man*, *A patient man will bear for a time, and afterwards joy shall spring up unto him.*

Job 5. 16. 1 Thes. 4. 13. Heb. 6. 19. Rom. 12. 12. Lam. 3. 26. Isa. 26. 3. Eccl. 1. 23.

The truth is, and it seemeth very observable, in order to our purpose, that most discontent ariseth not from the sense of incumbent evil, but from suspicion, or fear of somewhat to come; Although God at present dispenseth a competency of food and rayment, although we are in a tolerable condition, and feel no extremity of want or pain, yet not descrying the way of a future provision for us, answerable to our desires, we do trouble our selves; which demeanour implyeth great ignorance and infidelity; We think God obliged in kindness, not only to bestow upon us what is needful in its season, but to furnish us with stores, and allow us securities; we must have somewhat in hand, or we cannot trust him for the future; this is that which our Saviour cautioneth against, as the root of discontent and sign of diffidence; *Take no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of it self, sufficient to the day is the evil thereof*: An advice no less pious, than manifestly full of Reason and Wisdom; For what a palpable folly is it to anticipate that evil which we would avoid; then, when we earnestly desire to put off sorrow, to pull it toward us; to feel that mischief which possibly shall never be; to give it a being in our fancy, which it may never have in nature? Could we follow this advice, never resenting evils before they come, never prejudging about future events against God's Providence, and our own quiet; constantly depending on the di-

Πολλῆς μικροψυχίας ἐστὶν ὑπὲρ ἃ οὔπω γέγονε συμπονεῖσθαι καὶ μηδ' ὅλως συμπονοῦντα τῷ ἀδυμίαν ἤδη καρπώσεις καὶ κόπους. Chrys. *ad Stagir.* 2.

Matt. 6. 34.

Calamitosus est animus futuri anxius, & ante miseriam miser.

Ne sis miser ante tempus; cum illa quæ imminentia expavisti, fortasse nunquam ventura sint, certè nondum venerint, &c. Sen. *Ep.* 13.

Quod juvat dolori suo occurrere? satis cito dolebis cum venerit. Ibid.

Quoties in certa erunt maria, tibi flave. Ibid.

vine care for us; not taking falſe alarms, and trembling at things, which ſhall never come near us; not being diſturbed with panick fears, no diſcontent could ever ſeize upon us; for the preſent is ever ſupportable; our mind cannot be overwhelmed by the pangs of a tranſitory moment.

If we need farther encouragement for application of this remedy, we have manifold experiments to aſſure its vertue: as there are innumerable Promiſes, that none who hope in God ſhall be diſappointed, ſo there are many illuſtrious examples of thoſe, whom God hath in remarkable manner, and wonderful meaſure relieved from wants and diſtreſſes, raiſing them out of deepeſt poverty, contempt and worldly wretchedneſs, into moſt eminent degrees of Wealth and Proſperity: *Look* (ſaith the *Hebrew* Sage) *into the ancient generations, and ſee; Who hath truſted in the Lord, and hath been aſhamed? Or who hath abiden in his fear, and hath been forſaken? Or who hath invoked him, and he did over-look?* (*or deſpiſe him?*) If we look into thoſe generations, we may there find *Joſeph* out of ſlavery, and out of priſon, advanced to be the chief Governour of a moſt flouriſhing Kingdom; *Moſes* from an exile, and a vagrant, made the Redeemer and Commander of a populous Nation: *Job* out of extream poverty and diſgrace, reſtored to be in Wealth and honour *twice* greater than *the greateſt men of the Eaſt*: *Daniel* out of captivity and perſecution, become Preſident of the greateſt Monarchy on earth: *David* raiſed out of great meanneſs to higheſt dignity, reſtored out of extream ſtraits into a moſt proſperous ſtate; according to thoſe Words of admiration and acknowledgment; *O what great troubles and adverſities haſt thou ſhewed me; and yet didſt thou turn and refreſh me, yea and broughteſt me from the deep of the earth again: Thou haſt brought me to great honour, and comforted me on every ſide*: Thus hath God eminently done with divers, thus we may be aſſured that he will do competently with us, if with the like faith and patience, we do, as they did, rely and wait upon him.

Lam. 3. 25. Iſa. 30. 18. 40. 31. 49. 23. Pſal. 25. 3. 37. 9. 9. 10. 2 Chron. 28. 9. Ezra 8. 22. Amos 5 4. 2 Chron. 15. 2. Eccl. 2. 10.

Job 42. 10. 1. 3.

Pſal. 71. 18. 65. 29. 18. 36.

6. But farther, imagine or ſuppoſe, that our condition (ſo irkſome to us at preſent) will certainly hold on to the utmoſt; yet conſider alſo, that it ſoon will ceaſe, and change of it ſelf; ſince we are mortal, our evils cannot be perpetual, we cannot long be infeſted with them.

As it may debaſe, and embitter all the proſperity in the World, to conſider, that it is very fading and ſhort-lived, that its ſplendour is but a blaze, its pleaſure but a flaſh, its joy but as the *crackling of thorns*; ſo it ſhould abate and ſweeten any adverſity, to remember, that it is paſſing away, and ſuddenly will be gone. Put, I ſay, the worſt caſe that can be, that it were certainly determined, and we did as certainly know it, that thoſe things which cauſe our diſpleaſure, ſhould continue through our whole life; yet ſince our life it ſelf will ſoon be ſpun out, and with it all our worldly evils will vaniſh, Why are we troubled? What is ſaid of our ſelves muſt in conſequence be truly applied to them; *They flee like a ſhadow, and continue not*; they are *winds paſſing and coming not again*; they are *vapours appearing for a little time, and then vaniſhing away*; they *wither like graſs, and fade away as a leaf*; they may dye before us, they cannot outlive us; our life is but a *hand breadth*; And can then our evils have any vaſt bulk? *Our age is as nothing*, And can any croſſes therein be then any great matter? How can any thing ſo very ſhort be very intolerable? It is but ὀλίγον ἄρτι λυπηθέντες, being (as St. *Peter* ſpeaketh) *a little while yet aggrieved*; it is but μικρὸν ὅσον ὅσον, *a ſmall quantity whatever it be of time*, as the *Apoſtle* to the *Hebrews* ſaith, that *we need patience*, it is but τὸ μικρὸν ὅσον ὅσον

Eccl. 7. 6. (Pſal. 27. 13.) *I had fainted, if I had not believed to ſee the goodneſs of the Lord in the land of the living.*

1 Chron. 29. 15. Pſal. 78. 39. Jam. 4. 14. Pſal. 90. 5. Iſa. 64. 6. 40. 6. Pſal. 39. 5. *Omnia brevia tolerabilia eſſe debent, etiamſi magna.* Cic. Tuſc. 1 Pet. 1. 6.

ἐλαφρὸν ἡ θλίψις, *an affliction for a preſent moment*; and therefore as St. *Paul* intimateth, *light* and inconſiderable that we are to undergo. We have but a very narrow ſtrait of time to paſs over, but we ſhall land on the firm, and vaſt continent of eternity; when we ſhall be freed from all the troubleſome agitations, from all the perilous ſtorms, from all the nauſeous qualms of this navigation; death (which may be very near, which cannot be far off) is a ſure haven from all the tempeſts of life, a ſafe refuge from all the perſecutions of the World, an infallible medicine of all the diſeaſes of our mind, and of our ſtate: it will inlarge us from all reſtraints, it will diſcharge all our debts, it will eaſe us from all our toils, it will ſtifle all our cares, it will vail all our diſgraces: it will ſtill all our complaints, and bury all our diſquiets; it will wipe all tears from our eyes, and baniſh all ſorrow from our hearts: it perfectly will level all conditions, ſetting the high and low, the rich and poor, the wiſe and ignorant all together upon even ground; ſmothering all the pomp and glories, ſwallowing all the Wealth and Treaſures of the World.

Heb. 10. 26, 27. 2 Cor. 4. 17.

Ἴσος χῶρος ἅπασι, πλήσιον τῇ βασιλεῦσι.
Πάντες ἴσοι νέκυες. Phocyl.

It is therefore but holding out a while, and all our moleſtation, of its own accord, will expire: time certainly will cure us; but it is better that we ſhould owe that benefit to reaſon, and let it preſently comfort us: It is better by rational conſideration, to work content in our ſelves, uſing the brevity and frailty of our life as an argument to ſuſtain us in our adverſity, than onely to find the end thereof as a natural and neceſſary means of evaſion from it.

Κρεῖττον —
Ὁ μέλλεις τῷ χρόνῳ χαρίζεσθαι, τοῦτο χαρίζεσθαι τῷ λόγῳ. Plut. *ad* Apoll.

Serious reflection upon our mortality, is indeed, upon many accompts a powerful antidote againſt diſcontent; being apt to extirpate the moſt radical cauſes thereof.

Is it becauſe we much admire theſe worldly things, that we ſo much grieve for the want of them? this will quell that admiration; For how can we admire them if we conſider, how in regard to us they are ſo very tranſitory, and evanid? How can we deem them much worth the having, when we can for ſo little time enjoy them, muſt ſo very ſoon quite part from them?

How can we dote on the World, ſeeing *The World* (as St. *John* ſaith) *paſſeth away, and the deſire thereof?* 1 Joh. 2. 27. 1 Cor. 7. 31.

How can we value any Worldly glory, ſince *All the glory of men is* (as St. *Peter* telleth us) *as the flower of the graſs*; ſince, (as the *Pſalmiſt* ſaith) *Man in honour abideth not, but is like the beaſts that periſh*? Eccl. 1. 3, &c. 1 Pet. 2. 24. Pſal. 49. 12. 82. 6.

How can we *ſet our heart* on riches conſidering that *Riches are not for ever*, nor *can* (as the *Wiſe-man* ſaith) *deliver from death*; that as St. *James* admoniſheth, *The rich man fadeth in his ways*; that it may be ſaid to any rich man, as it was to him in the *Goſpel*; *Thou fool, this night thy life ſhall be required of thee, and what thou haſt prepared to whom ſhall it fall?* Prov. 27. 24. 11. 4. Jam. 1. 11. Heb. 11. 25.

How can we fanſie pleaſure, ſeeing it is but πρόσκαιρος ἀπόλαυσις, a very *temporary fruition*; ſeeing however we do *eat*, or *drink*, or *play*, it followeth, the *morrow we ſhall dye*. 1 Cor. 15. 32.

How can we even admire any ſecular Wiſdom, and Knowledge, ſeeing that it is (as the *Pſalmiſt* telleth us) true of every man, that —— *his breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth, in that very day his thoughts periſh*; particularly it is ſeen that *Wiſe-men dye*, no otherwiſe then as *the fooliſh, and bruiſh perſon periſheth*; that, as *Solomon* with regret obſerved, *There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wiſedom in the grave whither we are going*. Pſal. 46. 4. Pſal. 49. 10. Eccleſ. 9. 10. 2. 14.

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Do we admire the condition of thoſe, who, upon the ſtage, do appear in the ſtate of Kings, do act the part of wealthy men, do talk gravely and wiſely like Judges or Philoſophers for an hour or two? If we do not admire thoſe ſhadows and mockeries of ſtate, Why do we admire any appearances upon this Theatre of the World, which are ſcarce a whit leſs deceitful, or more durable than they?

Is it an envious or diſdainful regret at the advantages of others before us (of others perhaps that are unworthy and unfit, or that are, as we conceit, no more worthy and capable than our ſelves) that gnaweth our heart; is it, that ſuch perſons are more wealthy, more honourable, in greater favour or repute, than we, that vexeth us? the conſideration how little time thoſe ſlender preeminences will laſt, may (if better remedies want due efficacy) ſerve toward rooting out that diſeaſe; the Pſal. 37. 1, 2. *Pſalmiſt* doth ſeveral times preſcribe it; *Fret not thy ſelf* (ſaith he) *againſt evil doers, neither be thou envious againſt the workers of iniquity, for they ſhall ſoon be cut down like the graſs, and wither as the green herb*; and, again, Pſal. 49. 17. *Be not afraid when one is made rich, and when the glory of his houſe is encreaſed; for when he dyeth he ſhall carry nothing away, his glory ſhall not deſcend after him:* and he being fallen into this ſcurvy diſtemper, did follow his own preſcription, Pſal. 73. 3, 17. *I was*, ſaith he, *envious at the fooliſh, when I ſaw the proſperity of the wicked—until I went into the ſanctuary of God, then underſtood I their end; ſurely thou didſt ſet them in ſlippery places — How are they brought into deſolation as in a moment?* So likewiſe doth *Solomon* preſcribe: Prov. 23. 17, 18. *Let not* (ſaith he) *thine heart envy ſinners*; Why not? *becauſe ſurely there is an end, and thine expectation ſhall not be cut off*: there will be a cloſe of his undeſerved proſperity, and a good ſucceſs to thy well grounded hope. So whatever doth breed diſcontent, the reflection upon our mortal and frail ſtate will be apt to remove it.

It was that which comforted *Job*, and fortified his patience under ſo Job 14. 14, 1. grievous preſſures; *All the days of my appointed time* (ſaid he) *I will wait till my change come:* He would not be weary while he lived of his afflictions, Gen. 47. 9. *becauſe the days of man are few, and full of trouble*: If they are *full of trouble*, and that be a ſadning conſideration; yet they are *few*, and that maketh amends, that is comfortable.

7. I add, that it is ſomewhat conſolatory to conſider, that the worſe our condition is here, the better we may hope our future ſtate will be; the more trouble and ſorrow we endure, the leſs of worldly ſatisfaction we enjoy here, the leſs puniſhment we have to fear, the more comfort we may hope to find hereafter; for as it is a woful thing to have received *our portion*, to have enjoyed *our conſolation in this life*, ſo 'tis a happy thing to have undergone our pain here. A Purgatory under-ground is probably a fable; but a purgatory upon earth hath good foundations, God is wont ſo to order it, that all men, that eſpecially good men, ſhall undergo it: Heb. 12. 7. for, *What Son is there whom the Father doth not chaſten? All that will live* 2 Tim. 3. 12. *godly in Chriſt Jeſus, muſt ſuffer perſecution.*

8. A like conſolation it is to conſider, that Wealth and Proſperity are great Talents, for the improvement of which we muſt render a ſtrict accompt, ſo that *to whom much is given, from him much ſhall be required*; ſo that they are in effect a burthen; from which poverty includes an exemption; for the leſs we have, the leſs we have to doe, the leſs we are reſponſible for; our burthen is ſmaller, our accompt will be more eaſie.

9. I ſhall in reference to our condition, and the nature of thoſe things which cauſe our diſcontent, but propoſe one conſideration more, or ask

one

one queſtion: What is it that we do want, or wait for? Is it any good we want, which by our care and induſtry we can procure; Is it any evil that afflicteth us, which by the like means we can evade? if it be ſo, Why then do we not vigorouſly apply our ſelves to the buſineſs; why do we not inſtead of idle vexat on, and ineffectual complaints, uſe the means offered for our relief? Do we like and love trouble? let us then be content to bear it; let us hug it and keep it cloſe; if not, let us employ the forces afforded us by nature, and by occaſion, to repel and remove it.

Τῶν μὲ δυναμένων ἰρίδος ἀπαλλάξαι καὶ ἀπλήστου, ξένου, διαμαχήσασθαι μόνον ὅσον πρὸς ἡμᾶς τοῖς ἰδίοις. Epict. 3. 24.

——Πεδας φέρε μᾶλ' ἀγαπᾶσθαι,
Ἐᾶς ἢ πρήσσει, καὶ ὅσον δύνῃ. Aur. Carm.

But if we grieve and moan, becauſe we cannot obtain ſome good above our reach, or not decline ſome unavoidable evil, what do we thereby but palpably expreſs our folly, and wilfully heighten our Woe; adding voluntary diſpleaſure to the heap of neceſſary want or pain; impreſſing more deeply on our ſelves the ſenſe of them? in ſuch a caſe patience is inſtead of a remedy, which, though it do not throughly cure the malady, yet it ſomewhat alleviateth it, preventing many bad ſymptomes, and aſſwaging the paroxyſms thereof. What boot it to winſe and kick againſt fortune? to do ſo will inflame us, and make us foam, but will not relieve or eaſe us: if we cannot get out of the net, or the cage, to flutter and flounce will do nothing but batter and bruiſe us.

——*Levius fit patienti a*
Quicquid corrigere eſt nefas. Hor.

Animus æquus optimum eſt ærumnæ condimentum. Plaut. *Rud.*

Ἐπὶ ζημίᾳ χρημάτων καὶ θανάτῳ, καὶ ἀῤῥωστίᾳ καὶ τοῖς λοιποῖς τοῖς συμπίπτουσιν ἡμῖν δεινοῖς ἀλγοῦντες καὶ ἀδυμῶντες ἐ μόνον ἀφέλειαν ἀπ' ταυτῆς περιέμεθα παραμυθίαν· ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐπιτείνομεν τὰ δεινά. Ch. yl. Ἀνθρ. 3.

Οἱ δὲ τῷ πάθει δυλωθέντες οὐδὲν μᾶλλον ἀλοφυρμοῖσι, ἀνιαρῶς δὲ ἰώσονται, καὶ παρέξουσι ἧσσον ὅλον τὸ ἡμάρτημα. Theod. *Ep.* 15.

But farther, to allay our diſcontents, let us conſider the World, and general ſtate of Men here.

1. Look *firſt* upon the World, as it is commonly managed and ordered by Men: Thou perhaps art diſpleaſed, that thou doſt not proſper and thrive therein, that thou doſt not ſhare in the goods of it; that its accommodations and preferments are all ſnapt from thee; that thy pretences are not ſatisfied, and thy deſigns fail; this thou doſt take to be ſomewhat hard, and unequal; and therefore art grieved. But if thou art wiſe, thou ſhouldſt not wonder; if thou art good, thou ſhouldſt not be vexed hereat: for thou haſt not, perhaps, any capacity for this World; thy temper and diſpoſition are not framed to ſuit with its way; thy principles and rules do claſh with it, thy reſolutions and deſigns do not well comport with proſperity here; thou canſt not, or wilt not uſe the means needful to compaſs worldly ends: Thou perhaps haſt a meek, quiet, modeſt, ſincere, ſteady diſpoſition; thou canſt not be pragmatical, and boiſterous, eager and fierce, importunately troubleſome, intolerably confident, unaccomptably verſatile and various: Thou haſt certain pedantick notions about right and wrong, certain Romantick fancies about another World (unlike to this) which thou doſt ſtiffly adhere to, and which have an influence upon thy actions: Thou haſt a ſqueamiſh conſcience, which cannot reliſh this, cannot digeſt that advantageous courſe of proceeding; a ſcrupulous humour, that hampereth thee, and curbeth thee from attempting many things which would ſerve thy purpoſe; thou haſt a ſpice of ſilly generoſity, which maketh divers profitable ways of acting (ſuch as forging and feigning, ſupplanting others by detraction and calumny, ſoothing

ing and flattering people) to be below thee, and unworthy of thee; Thou thinkeſt thy ſelf obliged, and art peremptorily reſolved to obſerve ſtrict rules of juſtice, of humanity, of charity, to ſpeak as thou meaneſt, to do as thou wouldſt be done to, to wrong no man any-wiſe, to conſider and tender the caſe of other men as thine own: Thy deſigns are honeſt and moderate, conducible to (or at leaſt conſiſtent with) the publick good, injurious, or hurtful to no man; Thou carrieſt on thy deſigns by fair ways, by a modeſt care, and harmleſs diligence; nor canſt be drawn to uſe any other, how ſeemingly needful ſoever, which do ſavour of fraud, violence, any ſort of wrong or baſeneſs: Thou haſt an honeſt pride and haughtineſs of mind, which will not let thee condeſcend to uſe thoſe ſly tricks, crooked ways and ſhifts, which commonly are the compendious and moſt effectual ways of accompliſhing deſigns here: Thou art, in fine (like *Helvidius Priſcus*) in thy dealings and proceedings, *pervicax recti*, wilfully and *peeviſhly honeſt*: Such an one perhaps art thou, and ſuch is thy way; And canſt thou hope to be any body, or get any thing here? Shall ſuch a ſuperſtitious fop, ſuch a conſcientious ſimpleton, ſuch a baſhful ſneaksby, ſo phantaſtick a philoſopher pretend to any thing here? No, thou art here *piſcis in arido*, quite out of thy element; this World is not for *thee* to thrive in.

Τὸ τῶν ἥδιον χαλκὸν τῇ ἀτεχνον καὶ σοβῆς τὰς τῶδε ἀνθρώπους πίνυτας ἀνεπιτήδειον. Naz. Ep. 63.

This World is for Worldlings to poſſeſs and enjoy: *It was* (ſay the *Rabbins*) *made for the preſumptuous*; and although God did not altogether deſign it for them, yet men have almoſt made it ſo: They are beſt qualified to thrive in it, who can luſtily buſtle and ſcramble; who can fiercely ſwagger and huff; who can fawn; who can wind and wriggle like a Serpent; who can finely cog and gloze; who can neatly ſhuffle and juggle; who can ſhrewdly over-reach and undermine others; thoſe ſlippery wily artiſts, who can veere any whither with any Wind; thoſe men of impregnable confidence, who can inſiſt upon any pretences; who can be indefatigably and irreſiſtibly urgent, nor will be repulſed or baffled by any means; thoſe who have a temper ſo laxe and ſupple, that they can bend it to any compliance advantageous to them; who have a ſpirit ſo limber, that they can ſtretch it any whither; who have face enough, and conſcience little enough to do any thing; who have no certain principles, but ſuch as will ſort with their intereſts: no rules but ſuch *Lesbian* and leaden ones, that eaſily may be accommodated to their purpoſes: whoſe deſigns all tend to their own private advantage, without any regard to the publick, or to the good of others; who can uſe any means conducible to ſuch deſigns, bogling at nothing, which ſerveth their purpoſe; nor caring what they ſay, be it true or falſe; what they do, be it right or wrong, ſo it ſeem profitable: this is called wiſdom, prudence, dexterity, ability, knowledge of men, and of the world, and I know not what beſide; in the *Scripture* the *wiſdom of the world*, and *of the fleſh*, *craft*, *guile*, *deceit*, πανουργία, &c. For ſuch Perſons it is to flouriſh in this World; *Behold, theſe* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*) *are the ungodly, who proſper in the world*; *and who encreaſe in riches*; *They are not in trouble as other men, neither are they plagued like other men*; *Their eyes ſtand out with fatneſs, they have more than heart could wiſh*: They it is who love the World, who ſeek it, who ſtudy and labour for it; Who ſpend all their time, and employ all their care about it; And is it not fit they ſhould have it? Is it not a

Quod facillimum factu eſt, pravis, & callidis bonis & modeſtis anteibat. Tac. Hiſt. 1.

Ἐφιλάτης σεσηγὼς ὀνειδίσαις καὶ ματῶ τὴν πνίαν, τὸ ἔτερον ν, ἐφ, διὰ τὸ λίγειν ὅτι δίκαιός εἰμι. Æl. 13. 39.

Pſal. 73. 12. 5, 7.

1 Joh. 2. 16.

pity

pity they ſhould miſs it? Is it not natural, that they *who ſow to the fleſh, ſhould reap from the fleſh?* Should not they who uſe the proper means obtain the end? Should not they arrive at the place, who proceed in the direct road thither?

But for thee, who canſt not find in thy heart to uſe the means, why doſt thou hope to compaſs the end; or grieve for not attaining it? Why doſt thou blend and jumble ſuch inconſiſtences together, as the eager deſires of this, and the hopes of another World? It becometh not ſuch a gallant to whine and pule. If thou wilt be brave, be brave indeed; ſingly and throughly; be not a double-hearted mongrel; think not of ſatisfying thy mind, and driving on other intereſts together; of enjoying the conceit of being an honeſt man, with the deſign of being a rich or great man; of arriving to the happineſs of the other World, and attaining proſperity in this? Wouldſt thou enjoy both theſe? What conſcience is there in that? Leave rather this World unto thoſe, who are more fit for it, who ſeem better to deſerve it, who venture ſo much, and take ſuch pains for it; do not go to rob them of this ſlender reward; but with content ſee them to enjoy the fruits of their labour and hazard: Be thou ſatisfied with the conſequences of thy vertuous reſolutions and proceedings; if it be worth thy while to live innocently, modeſtly and conſcientiouſly, do it, and be ſatisfied; ſpoil not thine expectations by repining at the want of thoſe things, which thy circumſtances render incompatible with them; Follow effectually the holy *Patriarchs*, and *Apoſtles*, who, without regret, forſook all, and chearfully went thither, whither conſcience and duty called them; if thou art not willing to do ſo, Why doſt thou pretend to the ſame principles, or hope for the like rewards? But leaving the conſideration of the World as man hath made it; Conſider that this World is not in its nature or deſign, a place of perfect eaſe and convenience, of pure delight and ſatisfaction: What is this World but a region of tumult and trouble; a Theatre of vanity and diſaſters; the Kingdom of care, of fear, of grief and pain; of ſatiety, of diſappointment, of regret and repentance? We came not hither to do our Will, or enjoy our pleaſure; we are not born to make Laws for our ſelves, or to pick our condition here: No, this World is a place of baniſhment from our firſt Countrey, and the original felicity we were deſigned to; this life is a ſtate of travel toward another *better Countrey* and ſeat of reſt: and well it is, in ſuch caſes, (well it is, I ſay, for us as Exiles and Travellers) if we can find any tolerable accommodation, if we can make any hard ſhift; It ſhould not be ſtrange unto us, if in this our peregrination we do meet with rough paſſages, foul ways, hard lodging, ſcant or courſe fare; if we complain of ſuch things, we do not ſurely conſider where we are, whence we came, whither we are going; we forget that we are the Sons of *Adam*, the Heirs of ſin and ſorrow, who have forfeited our reſt and joy upon Earth; we conſider not, how unavoidable the effects are of that fatal condemnation and curſe, which followed our firſt tranſgreſſion; we mind not that the perfection and purity of the bleſſiugs we have loſt is not to be found on this ſide the celeſtial Paradiſe. This World is purpoſely made ſomewhat unpleaſant to us, leſt we ſhould over-much delight in it, be unwilling to part with it, wiſh to ſet up our reſt here, and ſay, *Bonum eſt eſſe hic*; *It is good for us to be here.*

1 Cor. 10. 13.

Πειρασμὸν ὄζιν ὁ βίος τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐπὶ γῆς. Job 7. 1. Chryſ. *ad Stag.* 2. *(p.* 106.)

Οὐ νενομοθετηκότες ἡλθομεν εἰς τὸν βίον, &c. Plut. *ad* Apollon.

Διὰ τᾶτο καὶ ὁ θεὸς ὅπου πονον φύσει καὶ μοχθηρὸν ἡμῶν τὸν βίον κατεσκεύασεν, ἵνα μὴ σφόδρα ἐνταῦθα συνεθάμβοι τὴν διάλυσεως ἐπιθυμίαν τῆς μελλόντων λαβωμεν. εἰ δὲ νῦν, &c. Chryſ. *ad ſp.* 5.

This life is a ſtate of probation and exerciſe, like to that (which prefigured and repreſented it) of Gods People in the Wilderneſs, wherein *God leadeth us* through many difficulties and hazards, in many wants and hardſhips, to *humble and prove us*, in order to the fitting us for another more happy ſtate.

Deut. 8. 23.

Λογίζεσθε χρὴ, ὅτι ὁ μὲν θεὸς ἐπάθλων, καὶ στεφάνων καιρὸς ὁ μέλλων ἐστὶν αἰῶν. θεὸς δὲ παλαισμάτων καὶ ἱδρώτων παρῶν. Chryſ. *ad Stagir.* 2.

Πειρασμὸς ὑμᾶς εἰκ εἴληφεν εἰ μὴ ἀνθρώπινος. 1 Cor. 10. 3.

Eccluſ. 40. 1. Ἀσχολία ἔκτισται παντὶ ἀνθρώπῳ, &c.

Job 5. 7.

Vid. Max. Tyr. *diſſ.* 25. *p.* 244.

Is was the doom of man to eat his bread in ſorrow all the days of his life. *Gen.* 3. 17.

Eccl. 1. 14. *All is vanity and vexation of ſpirit.*

Apoc. 21. 4.

Ὁ βίος ἀληθῶς ἐ βίος, ἀλλὰ ξυμφορά.
Βίος γὰρ ὄνομ' ἔχει, πόνος δ' ἔργῳ πέλει. Eurip.

Quid eſt diu vivere, niſi diu torqueri? Aug.

No temptation therefore (or affliction) *can ſeize upon us, but ſuch as is humane*; that is, ſuch as is natural and proper to men, 'tis the conſideration, which St. *Paul* uſeth to comfort and ſupport us in troubles; and a plainly good one it is, for ſeeing *Man* (as *Eliphas* ſaith) *is born to trouble as the ſparks fly upward*; that nothing is more natural to any thing, than trouble is to us; if we are diſpleaſed therewith, we are in effect diſpleaſed that we are men; it implyeth that we gladly would put off our nature, and ceaſe to be our ſelves; we grieve that we are come to live in this World, and as well might we be vexed that we are not Angels; or that we are not yet in Heaven, which is the only place exempt from inconveniences and troubles, where alone *there is no ſorrow, no clamour, no pain.*

It hath always been, and it will ever be an univerſal complaint and lamentation, that the life of man and trouble are individual companions, continually, and cloſely ſticking one to the other; that life and miſery are but ſeveral names of the ſame thing; that our ſtate here is nothing elſe, but a combination of various evils (made up of cares, of labours, of dangers, of diſappointments, of diſcords, of diſquiets, of diſeaſes, of manifold pains and ſorrows) that all ages, from wailing infancy to querulous decrepitneſs, and all conditions, from the careful Sceptre to the painful ſpade, are fraught with many great inconveniences peculiar to each of them; that all the face of the Earth is overſpread with miſchiefs as with a general and perpetual deluge; that nothing perfectly ſound, nothing ſafe, nothing ſtable, nothing ſerene is here to be found; this with one ſad voice all mankind reſoundeth; this our *Poets* are ever moanfully ſinging, this our *Philoſophers* do gravely inculcate; this the experience of all times loudly proclaimeth; For what are all Hiſtories but continual regiſters of the evils incident to men; what do they all deſcribe, but Wars and ſlaughters, mutinies and ſeditions, tumults and confuſions, devaſtations and ruines? What do they tell us, but of men furiouſly ſtriving together, circumventing, ſpoiling, deſtroying one another? What do we daily hear reported, but cruel broils, bloudy battles, and tragical events; great numbers of men ſlain, wounded, hurried into captivity; Cities ſacked and raſed, Countries haraſſed and depopulated; Kingdoms and Commonwealths overturned? What do we ſee before us but men carking, toiling, bickering; ſome worn out with labour, ſome pining away for want, ſome groaning under pain? And amidſt ſo many common miſeries and misfortunes, in ſo generally confuſed and diſmal a ſtate of things, is it not ridiculouſly abſurd for us, doth it not argue in us a prodigious fondneſs of ſelf-love, heinouſly to reſent, or impatiently to bemoan our particular, and private croſſes? May not reaſonably that expoſtu-

Πλείη μὲν γὰρ γαῖα κακῶν, πλείη δὲ θάλασσα. Heſiod.

Ferre quam ſortem patiuntur omnes
Nemo recuſet. Sen. *Troad.*

Idèo mihi videtur rerum naturæ, quod graviſſimum fecit, commune feciſſe, ut crudelitatem fati conſolaretur æqualitas. Sen. *ad* Polyb. 21.

lation

lation of *Jeremy* to *Baruch* reach us? *The Lord ſaith thus, Behold, that which I have built, I will break down; and that which I have planted I will pluck up, even this whole land; And ſeekeſt thou great things for thy ſelf? ſeek them not; for behold I will bring evil on all fleſh.* Jer. 45. 4, 5.

4. Again, if we more cloſely and particularly ſurvey the ſtates of other men (of our brethren every-where, of our neighbours all about us) and compare our caſe with theirs, our condition hardly can appear to us ſo bad, but that we have many conſorts and aſſociates therein; many as ill, many far worſe beſtead than our ſelves. How many of our Brethren in the World may we obſerve conflicting with extream penury and diſtreſs; how many undergoing continual hard drudgeries to maintain their lives; how many ſorely pinched with hunger and cold; how many tortured with grievous ſickneſs; how many oppreſſed with debt; how many ſhut up under cloſe reſtraint; how many detained in horrible ſlavery; how many by the waſting rage of War rifled of their goods, driven from their homes, diſpoſſeſſed of all comfortable ſubſiſtence? How many, in fine, paſſing their lives in all the inconveniences of rude, beggarly, ſordid and ſavage barbariſm? And who of us have, in any meaſure, taſted of theſe, or of the like calamities? Yet are theſe Sufferers, all of them, the ſame in nature, with us; many of them, (as reaſon, as humility, as charity do oblige us to believe) deſerve as well, divers of them much better than our ſelves: What reaſon then can we have to conceive our caſe ſo hard, or to complain thereof? Were we the only perſons expoſed to trouble, or the ſingle marks of adverſe fortune; could we truly ſay with the *Prophet*; *Behold, if there be any ſorrow like my ſorrow*: We might ſeem a little unhappy; but ſince we have ſo much good company in our conceived Woe; ſince it is ſo ordinary a thing to be poor, and diſtreſſed; ſince *our caſe is* (as the *Poet* ſpeaketh) *not rare, but commonly known, trite, and drawn out from the heap of lots, offered to men by fortune*: Since pitiful objects do thus environ and encloſe us; 'tis plainly reaſonable, humane and juſt, that we ſhould without murmuring take, and bear our lot: For what priviledge have we to alledge, that we rather than others ſhould be untouched by the grievances, to which mankind is obnoxious? Whence may we pretend to be the ſpecial favorites, mignons, privado's and darlings of fortune? Why may not God well deal with us, as he doth with other men; what grounds have vve to challenge, or to expect, that he ſhould be partial tovvard us; vvhy ſhould vve imagine, that he muſt continually do miracles in our behalf, cauſing all thoſe evils, which fall upon our neighbours all about to skip over us, bedewing us, like *Gideon*'s *fleece*, with plenty and joy, while all the earth beſide is dry; cauſing us, like the *three children*, to walk in this wide furnace, unſcorched and unſinged by the flames encompaſſing us? Are we not men framed of the ſame mould; are we not ſinners guilty of like offences, with the meaneſt Peaſant, the pooreſt beggar, the moſt wretched ſlave (if ſo, then a parity of fortune with any men doth become us, and may be due to us; then it is a perverſe and unjuſt frowardneſs to be diſpleaſed with our lot) we may, if we pleaſe, pity the common ſtate of men, but we cannot reaſonably complain of our own; doing ſo plainly doth argue, that we do unmeaſurably overprize, and overlove our ſelves. When once a *great King* did exceſſively, and obſtinately grieve for the death of his Wife, whom he tenderly loved, a *Philoſopher* obſerving it, told him,

Lam. 1. 12.

——— *Nec rara videmus*
Quæ patoris; caſus multis hic cognitus & jam
Tritus, & è medio fortunæ ductus acervo. Juv. *Sat.* 13. *v.* 8.

Te nunc delicias extra communia cenſus
Ponendum, &c. Juv. *Sat.* 13. *v.* 140.

Jud. 6. 37.

Dan. 3. 25.

" That he was ready to comfort him by reſtoring her to life, ſuppoſing " onely, that he would ſupply what was needful toward the performing " it; " The *King* ſaid he was ready to furniſh him with any thing; the *Philoſopher* anſwer'd, " That he was provided with all things neceſſary, " except one thing, what that was the *King* demanded; he replied, *That if he would upon his Wives Tomb inſcribe the names of three perſons, who never mourned, ſhe preſently would revive*: the *King*, after inquiry, told the *Philoſopher*, That he could not find one ſuch man: *Why then, O abſurdeſt of all men* (ſaid the *Philoſopher* ſmiling) *art thou not aſhamed to moan as if thou hadſt alone fallen into ſo grievous a caſe; when as thou canſt not find one perſon, that ever was free from ſuch domeſtick affliction*? So might the naming one perſon, exempted from inconveniences, like to thoſe we undergo, be ſafely propoſed to us as a certain cure of ours; but if we find the condition impoſſible, then is the generality of the caſe a ſufficient ground of content to us; then may we, as the wiſe *Poet* adviſeth, *ſolace our own evils by the evils of others*, ſo frequent and obvious to us.

Ἔτι ὦ πάντων ἀτοπώτατε δηλωθεὶς ἀναίδλων, ὡς μόνῳ σοὶ ἀλγεινῷ τοσούτῳ συμπλακεὶς, ὁ μηδὲ ἕνα ἅμα πώποτε μεμονώμενον ἀμοιρον οἰκείων παίδων ἔχων ἀρεῖν. Jul. *Ep.* 38.

Παρηγόρει τὰ κακὰ δι' ἑτέρων κακῶν. Menand.

Nulli ad aliena reſpicienti ſua placent. Sen. *de Ira.* 3. 31.

5. We are indeed very apt to look upward toward thoſe few, who, in ſuppoſed advantages of life (in wealth, dignity, or reputation) do ſeem to tranſcend, or to precede us, grudging and repining at their fortune; but ſeldom do we caſt down our eyes on thoſe innumerably many good people, who lie beneath us in all manner of accommodations, pitying their mean, or hard condition; like Racers we look forward, and purſue thoſe who go before us, but reflect not backward, or conſider thoſe who come behind us: two or three outſhining us in ſome ſlender piece of proſperity, doth raiſe diſſatisfaction in us; while the doleful ſtate of millions doth little affect us with any regard or compaſſion: hence ſo general diſcontent ſpringeth, hence ſo few are ſatisfied with their condition; an epidemical eye-ſore moleſting every man; for there is no man, of whatſoever condition, who is not in ſome deſirable things outſtripped by others; none is ſo high in fortune, but another in Wit or Wiſdom, in health, or ſtrength, or beauty, in reputation or eſteem of men may ſeem to excel him; he therefore looking with an *evil* or envious *eye* on ſuch perſons, and with ſenſeleſs diſregard paſſing over the reſt of men, doth eaſily thereby loſe his eaſe and ſatisfaction from his own Eſtate: Whereas if we would conſider the caſe of moſt men, we ſhould ſee abundant reaſon to be ſatisfied with our own; if we would a little feel the calamities of our neighbours, we ſhould little reſent our own croſſes; a kindly commiſeration of others more grievous diſaſters would drown the ſenſe of our leſſer diſappointments.

——*Neque ſe majori pauperiorum*
Turbæ comparet, hunc atque hunc ſuperare laboret:
Ut cum carceribus, &c. Hor. *Sat.* 1.

Inde fit ut nemo, qui ſe vixiſſe beatum
Dicat, &c. Hor. *Sat.* 1.

Si vis gratus eſſe adverſus Deos, & adverſus vitam tuam, cogita quàm multos anteceſſeris. Sen. *Ep.* 15.

Nunquam vit felix, quem torquebit felicior. Sen. *de Ira.* 3. 31. *Vid. Ib.*

If with any competent heedfulneſs we view perſons and things before us, we ſhall eaſily diſcern, that what abſolutely ſeemeth great and weighty, is indeed comparatively very ſmall and light; that things are not ſo unequally diſpenſed, but that we have our full ſhare in good, and no more than our part in evil; * that *Socrates* had reaſon to ſuppoſe, that, *if we ſhould bring into one common ſtock all our miſhaps, ſo that each ſhould receive his portion of them, gladly the moſt*

Εἰ συνενέγκαιμι εἰς τὸ κοινὸν τὰς ἀτυχίας, ὥστε διαλέξαι τὸ ἴσον ἕκαστον, ἀσμένως ἂν τὰς πλείους τὰς αὑτῶν λαβόντας ἀπελθεῖν. Plut. *Apoll.*

* That at worſt we are *Extremi primorum, extremis uſque priores.* Hor. *Epiſt.* 2. 2.

moſt would take up their own, and go their ways; that conſequently it is both iniquity and folly in us to complain of our lot.

6. If even vve vvould take care diligently to compare our ſtate vvith the ſtate of thoſe, vvhom vve are apt moſt to admire and envy, it vvould afford matter of conſolation, and content unto us. What is the ſtate of the greateſt perſons (of the Worlds *Princes* and *Grandees*) what but a ſtate encompaſſed with ſnares, and temptations numberleſs; which without extreme caution, and conſtancy, force of reaſon, and command of all appetites, and paſſions cannot be avoided; and ſeldom are? What but a ſtate of pompous trouble, and gay ſervility, of living in continual noiſe and ſtir, environed with crouds and throngs, of being ſubject to the urgency of buſineſs, and the tediouſneſs of ceremony; of being abuſed by perfidious ſervants, and mocked by vile flatterers; of being expoſed to common cenſure and obloquy, to miſrepreſentation, miſconſtruction and ſlander; having the eyes of all men intent upon their actions, and as many ſevere judges as watchful ſpectatours of them; of being accomptable for many mens faults, and bearing the blame of all miſcarriages about them; of being reſponſible in conſcience, for the miſcarriages and miſhaps which come from the influence of our counſels, our examples, *&c.* of being peſter'd and purſu'd with pretences, with ſuits, with complaints, the neceſſary reſult whereof is to diſpleaſe or provoke very many, to oblige or ſatisfie very few, of being frequently ingaged in reſentments of ingratitude, of treachery, of neglects, of defects in duty, and breaches of truſt toward them; of being conſtrained to comply with the humours and opinion of men; of anxious care to keep, and jealous fear of loſing all; of danger and being objected to the traiterous attempts of bold male-contents, of fierce zealots and wild fanaticks; of wanting the moſt ſolid and ſavoury comforts of life, true friendſhip, free converſation, certain leaſure, privacy and retiredneſs, for enjoying themſelves, their time, their thoughts as they think good; of ſatiety and being cloyed with all ſorts of enjoyments: In fine, of being paid with falſe coin for all their cares and pains, receiving for them ſcarce any thing more, but empty ſhews of reſpect, and hollow acclamations of praiſe; (whence the *Pſalmiſt* might well ſay, *Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree a lye*; a lye, for that their ſtate cheateth us, appearing ſo ſpecious, yet being really ſo inconvenient and troubleſome.) Such is the ſtate of the greateſt men; ſuch as hath made wiſe Princes weary of themſelves, ready to acknowledge, that if men knew the weight of a Crown, none would take it up, apt to think with Pope *Adrian*, who made this *Epitaph* for himſelf; *Here lyeth* Adrian *the* Sixth, *who thought nothing in his life to have befallen him more unhappy, than that he ruled*: Such, in fine, their ſtate, as upon due conſideration we ſhould, were it offered to our choice, never embrace; ſuch indeed, as in ſober judgment, we cannot prefer before the moſt narrow and inferiour fortune: How then can we reaſonably be diſpleaſed with our condition, when we may even pity *Emperours* and *Kings*, when, in reality, we are as well, perhaps are much better than they.

Magna ſervitus eſt magna fortuna, &c. Sen. *ad* Polyb. 26.

Perſonata felicitas. Sen. *Ep.* 80. Pſal. 62. 9.

——— *adulandi certamen eſt, & unum omnium amicorum officium, una contentio quis blandiſſime faſtidiat.* Sen. *de Benef.* 6. 30.

Vid. optime diſſerentem.
Vid. & de Clem. 1. 19.
Et ad Polyb. 26.

Antigonus. *Neſcitis amici, quid mali ſit imperare, &c.* Saturninus *apud* Vopiſcum.

Hic ſitus eſt Adrianus VI. *qui nihil ſibi in vita infelicius duxit, quam quod imperavit.* Lud. Guicciard. P. Jovius *in vit.*

Nihil difficilius quam bene imperare. Diocleſ. *apud* Vopiſc. *in* Aureliano.

7. Farther, it may induce and ingage us to be content, to conſider what

what commonly hath been the lot of good men in the World: We ſhall, if we ſurvey the Hiſtories of all times, find the beſt men to have ſuſtained moſt grievous croſſes and troubles; ſcarce is there in holy Scripture recorded any perſon eminent and illuſtrious for goodneſs, who have not taſted deeply of wants and diſtreſſes. *Abraham, the Father of the faithful,* and eſpecial *friend of God,* was called out of his Countrey, and from his Kindred, to wander in a ſtrange land, and lodge in Tents, without any fixed habitation. *Jacob* ſpent a great part of his life in ſlaviſh toil, and in his old age was in reflection upon his life moved to ſay, *that the days of his pilgrimage had been few and evil.* *Joſeph* was maligned and perſecuted by his Brethren, ſold away for a ſlave, ſlandered for a moſt heinous crime, thruſt into a grievous priſon, where *his feet were hurt with fetters, and his ſoul came into iron.* *Moſes* was forced to fly away for his life, to become a vagabond in a foreign place, to feed ſheep for his livelihood; to ſpend afterwards the beſt of his life in conteſting with an obſtinately perverſe Prince, and in leading a miſtruſtful, refractary, mutinous people, for forty years time, through a vaſt and wild deſart. *Job,* what a ſtupendious heap of miſchiefs did together fall, and lie heavy upon him? *(Thou writeſt bitter things againſt me,* he might well ſay.) *David,* How often was he plunged in ſaddeſt extremity, and reduced to the hardeſt ſhifts; being *hunted like a partridge in the wilderneſs* by an envious Maſter, forced to counterfeit madneſs for his ſecurity among barbarous infidels; diſpoſſeſſed of his kingdom, and perſecuted by his own moſt favoured ſon; deſerted by his ſervants, reproached and ſcorned by his ſubjects? *Elias* was driven long to ſculk for his life, and to ſhift for his livelihood in the Wilderneſs. *Jeremy* was treated as an Impoſtour and a Traitour, and caſt into a miry Dungeon; finding matter from his doleful lamentations, and having thence occaſion to exclaim, *I am the man that have ſeen affliction by the rod of his wrath,* &c. *Which of the Prophets were not perſecuted,* and miſuſed? as St. *Stephen* asked. The *Apoſtles* were pinched with all kinds of want, haraſſed with all ſorts of toil, expoſed to all manner of hazards, perſecuted with all variety of contumelies, and pains that can be imagined: Above all, our Lord himſelf beyond expreſſion was *a man of ſorrow, and acquainted with grief,* ſurpaſſing all men in ſuffering as he did excel them in dignity, and in vertue; extream poverty, *having not ſo much as where to lay his head,* was his portion; to undergo continual labour and travel, without any mixture of carnal eaſe or pleaſure, was his ſtate; in return for the higheſt good will, and choiceſt benefits to receive moſt cruel hatred, and grievous injuries, to be loaded with the bittereſt reproaches, the fouleſt ſlanders, the ſoreſt pains which moſt ſpiteful malice could invent, or fierceſt rage inflict, this was his lot; *Am I poor,* ſo may one ſay, was he to extremity; Am I ſlighted of the World? ſo was he notoriouſly; Am I diſappointed, and croſſed in my deſigns? ſo was he continually, all his moſt painful endeavours having ſmall effect; Am I deſerted or betrayed of friends? ſo was he by thoſe who were moſt intimate, and moſt obliged to him; Am I reviled, ſlandered

Conſider what calamities great, powerful, glorious men have endured; *Craſſus, Polycrates, Pompey,* &c. *Sen. de Ira.* 2. 25.

Οἱ γὰρ Ἑλλήνων ἄριστοι πάντα διέζων παρὰ πάντα τὸν βίον. (Ariſtides, Phocion, Epaminondas, Pelopidas.) *Æl.* xi. 9. 11. 43.

Lamachus, Socrates, Ephialtes. Abel, Noe, &c. Chryſ. *Tom.* 6. *p.* 107.

Gen. 47. 9. Pſal. 105. 18.

Σὺ δὲ ἦλθεν ἡ ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ.

Socrates, Cato, Regulus, Phocion, &c. *Magnum exemplum niſi mala fortuna non invenit.*

Vid. Chryſ. *Tom.* 5. *Or.* 27. *p.* 168. & *Tom.* 6. *Or.* 10. *p.* 107. Job 13. 27. 1 Sam. 26. 20.

Νῦν καὶ πάλαι ἐξ οὗ γεγόνασιν ἄνθρωποι ἅπαντες οἱ τῷ θεῷ φίλοι τῷ συγγνῷ καὶ ὁπημόχθῳ καὶ μυρίων γέμοντι δεινῶν ἐπληρώθησαν βίου. Chryſ. *in Mart. Ægypt. T.* 5. 522.

Ἐν τοῖς πειρασμοῖς ἐῶσιν οἱ δίκαιοι, τὰς ἀγίας ἅπαντας ὅπως ἤγαγε ὁ θεὸς διὰ θλίψεως. Chryſ. *in* 2 Cor. *Or.* 27.

Lam. 3. 1. Acts 7. 52. 1 Cor. 4. & 7.

Chryſ. *Tom.* 6. *Or.* 93. Iſa. 53. 3.

Matt. 8. 20.

Ἐκ γὰρ δὴ πρῶτον φύντων ἀνθρώπων μάχεται τῷ παρόντι χαίρειν τὸν ὅλον ἐσπουδακότας σέβειν θεὸν ὄντι δίκαιον παρὰ δὴ συμβεβιωκότων ἀνθρώπων ἡδικημένους καὶ πλείστοις ἄγαν πεπιπτωκότας ἀνιαροῖς. Theod. *Ep.* 132.

dered, miſuſed? Was not he ſo beyond all compariſon moſt outrageouſly.

Have all theſe, and many more, of *whom the world was not worthy*, undergone all ſorts of inconvenience, being *deſtitute, afflicted, tormented*; And ſhall we then diſdain, or be ſorry to be found in ſuch company? *Having ſuch a cloud of martyrs, Let us run with patience the race that is ſet before us.* Is it not an Honour, ſhould it not be a comfort to us, that we do, in condition, reſemble them? If God hath thus dealt with thoſe, who of all men have been deareſt to him, ſhall we take it ill at his hands, that he, in any manner, dealeth ſo with us? Can we pretend, can we hope, can we even wiſh to be uſed better, than Gods firſt-born, and our Lord himſelf hath been? If we do, are we not monſtruouſly fond and arrogant? eſpecially conſidering, that it is not onely an ordinary fortune, but the peculiar character of God's choſen, and children, to be often croſſed, checked, and corrected; Even *Pagans* have obſerved it, and avowed there is great reaſon for it; *God* (ſaith *Seneca*) *hath a fatherly mind toward good men; and ſtrongly loveth them——therefore after the manner of ſevere parents, he educateth them hardly*, &c. The *Apoſtle* doth in expreſs terms aſſure us thereof; for, *whom* (ſaith he) *the Lord loveth, he chaſteneth, and ſcourgeth every ſon whom he receiveth. If ye endure chaſtening, God dealeth with you as with ſons—— but if ye be without chaſtiſement, whereof all* (that is, all good men, and genuine ſons of God) *are partakers, then are ye baſtards, and not ſons.* Would we be illegitimated, or expunged from the number of God's true children; would we be diveſted of his ſpecial regard and good-will? if not, Why do we not gladly embrace, and willingly ſuſtain adverſity, which is by himſelf declared ſo peculiar a badge of his children, ſo conſtant a mark of his favour? if *all* good *men* do (as the *Apoſtle* aſſerteth) *partake thereof*; ſhall we, by diſpleaſure at it, ſhew, that we deſire to be aſſuredly none of that party, that we affect to be diſcarded from that holy and happy ſociety? *Verily, verily I ſay unto you, that ye ſhall weep and lament, but the world ſhall rejoice.* It is peculiarly the lot of Chriſtians, as ſuch, in conformity to their afflicted Saviour; they are herein *predeſtinated to be conformable to his image; to this they are appointed.* (*Let no man*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *be moved by theſe afflictions, for ye know, that we are appointed thereunto:*) to this they are called (*if when we do well*, ſaith St. *Peter*, *and ſuffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with* God; *for even hereunto were ye called*) this is propounded to them as a condition to be undertaken, and undergone by them as ſuch; they are by profeſſion *crucigeri*, bearers of the croſs; (*If any one will come after me, let him deny himſelf, and take up his croſs and follow me*; *Every one that will live godly in Chriſt Jeſus, muſt ſuffer perſecution*) by this are they admitted into the ſtate of Chriſtians; (*by many afflictions we muſt enter into the kingdom of heaven*) this doth qualify them for enjoying the glorious rewards, which their religion propoundeth; (*We are coheirs with Chriſt*; ſo that, *if we ſuffer together, we ſhall alſo together be glorified with him*; *If we endure, we ſhall alſo reign with him*;) * And ſhall we then pretend to be Chriſtians, ſhall we claim any benefit from thence, if we are unwilling to ſubmit to the Law, to attend the call,

Heb. 11. 38.

Heb. 12. 1.

Sen. *de Provid. c.* 2.

Heb. 12. 6, 7, 8.

Eccluſ. 2. 1. Τέκνον, εἰ προσέρχῃ δουλεύειν κυρίῳ, ἑτοίμασον τὴν ψυχήν σου εἰς πειρασμόν.

John 16. 20.

Rom. 8. 29. 1 Theſſ. 3. 3. Phil. 3. 10.

1 Pet. 2. 20, 21.

Matt. 16. 24. 10. 38. 2 Tim. 2. 12. John 16. 33. Ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ θλῖψιν ἔξετε.

Quotam partem anguſtiarum perpeſſus ſum qui cruci milito. Hier. *ad* Aſellam, *Ep.* 99.

Acts 14. 22.

Vid. Greg. Naz. *Ep.* 201. (*ad* Theclam.)

2 Tim. 2. 12.

(Phil 3. 10.)

* It is a priviledge of Chriſtians, in favour beſtowed on them; ὑμῖν ἐχαρίσθη Phil. 1 29.

Our glory Eph. 3. 13.

Ὑπομονῆς ἔχετε χρεία. Heb. 10. 36. Faith and Patience are consorts. Heb. 6. 12. Apoc. 13. 10.

call, to comply with the terms thereof? Will we enjoy its priviledges, can we hope for its rewards, if we will not contentedly undergo what it requireth? Shall we arrive to the end it propoundeth, without going in the way it prescribeth, the way which our Lord himself doth lead us in, and himself hath trod before us?

In fine, seeing adversity is, as hath been declared, a thing so natural to all men, so common to most men, so incident to great men, so proper to good men, so peculiar to Christians, we have great reason to observe the *Apostles* advice; *Beloved, wonder not concerning the fiery trial, which is to try you, as if some strange thing happened to you*; we should not wonder at it as a strange, or uncouth thing, that we are engaged in any trouble or inconvenience here; we are consequently not to be affected with it as a thing very grievous.

1 Pet. 4. 12.

SERMON IX.

Of Contentment.

PHIL. 4. 11.

I have learned in whatsoever state, &c.

1 Tim. 6. 6. Ἔστι δὲ μέγας πορισμὸς ἡ εὐσέβεια μετ' αὐταρκείας.

Aug. *de Civ. Dei.* 1. 8.

MOreover considering the nature of this duty it self, may be a great inducement and aid to the practice of it.

1. It is it self a sovereign remedy, for all poverty and all sufferance; removing them, or allaying all the mischief they can do us. It is well and truly said by St. *Austine*, *Interest non qualia, sed qualis quis patiatur*; *It is no matter what, but how disposed a man suffereth*: The chief mischief any adversity can do us is to render us discontent, in that consisteth all the sting, and all the venome thereof; which thereby being voided, adversity can signify nothing prejudicial, or noxious to us; all distraction, all distemper, all disturbance from it is by the antidote of contentedness prevented or corrected. He that hath his desires moderated to a temper futable with his condition, that hath his passions composed and settled agreeably to his circumstances, what can make any grievous impression on him, or render him any-wise miserable? He that taketh himself to have enough, what doth he need? he that is well-pleased to be as he is, how can he be better, What can the largest Wealth, or highest prosperity in the World yeild more, or better than satisfaction of mind? he that hath this most essential ingredient of felicity, is he not thence in effect most fortunate? is not at least his condition as good as that of the most prosperous.

Cui cum paupertate bene convenit, divus est. Sen. *Ep.* 2.

Nemo aliorum sensu miser est, sed suo; & ideo non possunt cujusquam falso judicio esse misiri, qui sunt vere conscientia sua beati. Nulli beatiores sunt, quam qui hoc sunt quod volunt. Salv. *de Gubern. Dei*, 1.

2. As

2. As good do I say? yea is it not plainly much better, than can arise merely from any secular prosperity? for satisfaction springing from rational consideration, and vertuous disposition of mind is indeed far more pretious, more noble and worthy, more solid and durable, more sweet and delectable, than that which any possession, or fruition of worldly goods can afford: The τὸ ἄφθαρτον τῦ πραέος, καὶ ἡσυχίου πνεύματος, *incorruptibility* (as St. *Peter* speaketh) *of a meek and quiet spirit is before God of great price*; *before God*, that is, according to the most upright and certain judgment it is the most pretious and valuable thing in the World; *There is* (the *Philosopher* could say) *no spectacle more worthy of God* (or grateful to him) *than a good man gallantly combating with ill fortune.* Not to be discomposed or distempered in mind, not to fret or whine, when all things flow prosperously and according to our mind, is no great praise, no sign of wisdom, or argument of goodness; it cannot be reckoned an effect of sound judgment, or vertuous affection, but a natural consequent of such a state: But when there are evident occasions, and urgent temptations to displeasure, when present sense and fancy do prompt and provoke to murmuring, then to be satisfied in our mind, then to keep our passions in order, then to maintain good humour, then to restrain our tongue from complaint, and to govern our demeanour sweetly, this is indeed honourable and handsome; to see a worthy man sustain crosses, wants, disgraces with equanimity and chearfulness is a most goodly sight: such a person to a judicious mind appeareth in a far more honourable and invidious state, than any prosperous man: his vertue shining in the dark is far more bright and fair: *this* (as St. *Peter* saith, in a like case) *is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God suffereth grief*; if, in our case (we may say after him) a man out of conscientious deference to God's Will, doth contentedly undergo adversity, this God is ready to take for an obligation on himself, and will be disposed in a manner to *thank him* (or to reward him) for it: This indeed amounteth to a demonstration that such a person is truly wise and really good: so is the satisfaction of a contented poor man more worthy: And it is no less more sweet and comfortable, than that of any rich man, pleasing himself in his enjoyments; contentedness satisfieth the mind of the one, abundance doth only satiate the appetites of the other; the former is immaterial and sprightly, the complacence of a man; the latter is gross and dull, like the sensuality of a beast; the delight of that sinketh deep into the heart, the pleasure of this doth only float in the outward senses, or in the fancy; one is a positive comfort, the other but a negative indolency in regard to the mind: The poor good man's joy is wholly his own, and home-born, a lovely child of reason and vertue; the full rich man's pleasure cometh from without, and is thrust into him by impulses of sensible objects.

Οὐ γὰρ τὸ ποιῆσαί τι χρηστὸν μόνον, ἀλλὰ τὸ παθεῖν τι καλὸν πολλὰς ἔχει τὰς ἀμοιβὰς καὶ μεγάλα τὰ ἔπαθλα, &c. Chryt. *ad* Olymp. *Ep.* 3. *Vid. p.* 73.

Οὐδὲν τῦ ἐν ἀλγηδόσιν γενομένης εἰς δοκιμασίαν λόγον ἴσον· ἡ γὰρ βασιλὶς τῶν ἀγαθῶν, καὶ τῶν στεφάνων ἡ χορηγὸς αὕτη μάλιστά ἐστι. Chryt. *ad* Olymp. *Ep.* 16. *Vid. Epist.* 6. & *ad* Olymp. *Epist.* 3 (*p.* 75.) *de* Josepho. 1 Pet. 3. 4.

Ecce par Deo dignum vir bonus cum mala fortuna compositus. Sen. *de Provid.*

1 Pet. 2. 19.

Hence is the satisfaction of contented adversity far more constant, solid and durable, than that of prosperity; it being the product of immutable reason abideth in the mind, and cannot easily be driven thence by any corporeal impressions, which immediately cannot touch the mind; whereas the other, issuing from sense, is subject to all the changes, inducible from the restless commotions of outward causes affecting and altering sense: whence the satisfaction proceeding from reason and vertue, the

Honestarum est læta paupertas. Epic.

Οὐδὲ γὰρ ὁ διὰ τὸν πλοῦτον μόνον δοκιμεῖ, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁ ἀδίκως τι πάσχων, καὶ φέρων γενναίως, καὶ διαιτῶν τὸν συγχωρήσαντι Θεῷ οὐκ ἐλάττων τῦ διὰ τὸν Θεὸν ταῦτα πάσχοντός ἐστιν. Chryt. ἀνδρ. 5'.

longer it ſtayeth the firmer and ſweeter it groweth, turning into habit, and working nature to an agreement with it; whereas uſually the joys of wealth and proſperity do ſoon degenerate into faſtidiouſneſs, and terminate in bitterneſs, being *honey in the mouth*, but ſoon becoming *gall in the bowels*. Nothing indeed can affect the mind with a truer pleaſure, than the very conſcience of diſcharging our duty toward God in bearing hardſhip, impoſed by his providence, willingly and well. We have therefore much reaſon not only to acquieſce in our ſtraits but to be glad of them, ſeeing they do yeild us an opportunity of immediately obtaining goods, more excellent and more deſirable, than any proſperous or wealthy man can eaſily have, ſince they furniſh us with means of acquiring and exerciſing a vertue worth the moſt ample fortune; yea juſtly preferable to the beſt eſtate in the World; a vertue, which indeed doth not onely render any condition tolerable, but ſweetneth any thing, yea ſanctifieth all ſtates, and turneth all occurrences into bleſſings.

Apoc. 10. 10. Job 20. 20, 22.

3. Even the ſenſible ſmart of adverſity is by contentedneſs ſomewhat tempered and eaſed; the ſtiller and quieter we lye under it, the leſs we feel its violence and pungency: It is tumbling and toſſing, that ſtirreth the ill humours, and driveth them to the parts moſt weak, and apt to be affected with them; the rubbing of our ſores is that which enflameth and exaſperateth them: Where the mind is calm, and the paſſions ſetled, the pain of any grievance is in compariſon leſs acute, leſs ſenſible.

4. Whence if others in our diſtreſs are uncharitable to us, refuſing the help they might, or ſhould afford toward the reſcuing us from it, or relieving us in it, we hereby may be charitable and great benefactours to our ſelves; we ſhould need no *anodyne* to be miniſtred from without, no ſuccour to come from any creature, if we would not be wanting to our ſelves, in hearkening to our own reaſon, and enjoying the conſolation which it affordeth. In not doing this, we are more uncharitable and cruel to our ſelves, than any ſpiteful enemy or treacherous friend can be; no man can ſo wrong or moleſt us, as we do our ſelves by admitting or foſtering diſcontent.

5. The contented bearing of our condition is alſo the moſt hopeful and ready means of bettering it, and of removing the preſſures we lie under.

It is partly ſo in a natural way, as diſpoſing us to embrace and employ the advantages which occur conducible thereto; for as diſcontent blindeth men ſo that they cannot deſcry the ways of eſcape from evil, it diſpiriteth and diſcourageth them from endeavouring to help themſelves, it depriveth them of many ſuccours and expedients, which occaſion would afford for their relief; ſo he that being undiſturbed in his ſpirit hath his eyes open and his courage up, and all his natural powers in order, will be always ready and able to do his beſt, to act vigorouſly, to ſnatch any opportunity, and employ any means toward the freeing himſelf from what appeareth grievous to him.

Upon a ſupernatural accompt content is yet more efficacious to the ſame purpoſe: For chearful ſubmiſſion to Gods Will doth pleaſe him much, doth ſtrongly move him to withdraw his afflicting hand, doth effectually induce him to advance us into a moſt comfortable ſtate: Of all vertues there is none more acceptable to God than patience. God will take it well at our hands if we do contentedly receive from his hand the worſt things: 'tis a monſtrous thing not to receive proſperity with grateful ſenſe, but it is heroical with the ſame mind to receive things unpleaſant: he that doth

ſo

ſο ζημιοῦται μὲν ὡς ἄνθρωπος, στέφανοῦται δὲ ὡς φιλόθεος, *he ſuffereth loſs as a man; but is crowned as a lover of God.* Beſides that it is an unreaſonable thing to think of enjoying both reſt and pleaſure here, and the rewards hereafter; our conſolation here with *Dives*, and our refreſhment hereafter with *Lazarus*. Chryſ. *Tom.* 6. *Or.* 89. *Vid.* Chryſ. *ad Stag.* 1. & 2. (*p.* 106.)

Be humbled (ſaith St. *Peter*) *under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time* (ἐν καιρῷ when it is opportune and ſeaſonable) and *Be humble* (ſaith St. *James*) *before the Lord, and he will exalt you*, and, *When* (ſaith *Job*'s friends) *men are caſt down, then thou ſhalt ſay there is lifting up, and he will ſave the humble perſon.* God with favourable pity hearkeneth to the groans of them who are *humbly contrite* under his hand, and reverently *tremble at his word*; he *reviveth the ſpirit of the humble*; He *is nigh to the broken of heart*, and *ſaveth ſuch as are of a contrite ſpirit*; *He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds*; He proclaimeth *bleſſedneſs to the poor in ſpirit*, and *to thoſe that mourn*, becauſe they ſhall find comfort and mercy; all which declarations and promiſes are made concerning thoſe who bear adverſity with a ſubmiſs and contented mind; and we ſee them effectually performed in the caſes of *Ahab*, of the *Ninivites*, of *Nebuchadnezzar*, of *Manaſſes*, of *Hezekiah*, of *David*; of all perſons mentioned in *holy Scripture*, upon whom adverſities had ſuch kindly operations. But diſcontent and impatience do offend God, and provoke him to continue his judgments, yea to encreaſe the load of them: To be ſullen and ſtubborn is the ſure way to render our condition worſe, and more intolerable: For, *who hath hardened himſelf againſt God and proſpered?* The *Pharaohs* and *Sauls*, and ſuch like perſons, who rather would break than bend, who being diſſatisfied with their condition choſe rather to lay hold on other imaginary ſuccours, than to have recourſe to God's mercy and help; thoſe, who (like the refractary *Iſraelites*) have been *ſmitten in vain* as to any quiet ſubmiſſion or converſion unto God, what have they but plunged themſelves deeper into wretchedneſs?

1 Pet. 5. 6.

Jam. 4. 10.

Job 22. 29. (Luk. 14. 11. 18. 14.)

Iſa. 66. 2. 57. 15. Pſal. 34. 18. 51. 17. 147. 3. Matt. 5. 3, 4.

Job 9. 4. Jer. 2. 30. 5. 3. Iſa. 9. 13. 1. 5. 26. 10.

It is indeed to quell our haughty ſtomach, to check our froward humour, to curb our impetuous deſires, to calm our diſorderly paſſions, to ſuppreſs our fond admiration and eager affection toward theſe worldly things, in ſhort to work a contended mind in us, that God ever doth inflict any hardſhips on us, that he croſſeth us in our projects, that he detaineth us in any troubleſome ſtate; until this be atchieved, as it is not expedient that we ſhould be eaſed, as relief would really be no bleſſing to us; ſo God (except in anger and judgment) will no-wiſe grant or diſpenſe it; it would be a cruel mercy for him to do it; If therefore we do wiſh ever to be in a good caſe as to this World, let us learn to be contented in a bad one: Having got this diſpoſition firmly rooted in our hearts, we are qualified for deliverance and preferment; nor will God fail in that due ſeaſon to perform for us what he ſo often hath declared and promiſed; his nature diſpoſeth him, his word hath engaged him to help and comfort us.

Theſe are the moſt proper inducements unto contentedneſs, which conſidering (in the light of reaſon and holy *Scripture*) the nature of the thing, ſuggeſted unto my meditation: there are beſide ſome other means adviſable, (ſome general, ſome more particular) which are very conducible to the production of content, or removing diſcontent; which I ſhall touch, and then conclude.

1. A conſtant endeavour to live well, and to maintain a good conſcience, He that doeth this can hardly be diſmay'd or diſturbed with any occurrence here; this will yeild a man ſo ample and firm a ſatisfaction of

mind, as will bear down the ſenſe of any incumbent evils; this will beget ſuch hope in God, and ſo good aſſurance of his favour, as will ſupply the want of all other things, and fully ſatisfie us, that we have no cauſe to be troubled with any thing here; He that by conſcientious practice hath obtained ſuch a hope is prepared againſt all aſſaults of fortune with an undaunted mind and force impregnable; *He will* (as the *Pſalmiſt* ſaith) *not be afraid of any evil tydings, for his heart is fixed truſting in the Lord.* Maintaining this will free us from all anxious care, transferring it upon God; it will breed a ſure confidence, that he will ever be ready to ſupply us with all things convenient, to protect and deliver us from all things hurtful; enſuring to us the effect of that promiſe, by the conſcience of having performed the condition thereof: *Seek ye firſt the kingdom of God and its righteouſneſs, and all theſe things ſhall be added unto you.*

Pſal. 112. 1. 112. 6.

Matt. 6. 33.

This was that which ſupported the *Apoſtles* and kept them chearful under all that heavy load of diſtreſſes which lay upon them; *Our rejoicing is this* (could they ſay) *the teſtimony of our conſcience, that in ſimplicity and godly ſincerity —— we have had our converſation in this world.*

1 Cor. 1. 12. 1 Pet. 3. 16. Acts 23. 1. 24. 16.

'Tis the want of this beſt pleaſure, that both rendreth the abſence of all other pleaſures grievous, and their preſence inſipid; Had we a good conſcience we could not ſeem to want comfort; as we could not truly be unhappy, ſo we could hardly be diſcontent; without it no affluence of other things can ſuffice to content us. It is an evil conſcience that giveth an edge to all other evils, and enableth them ſorely to afflict us, which otherwiſe would but ſlightly touch us; we become thence uncapable of comfort, ſeeing not only things here upon earth to croſs us, but heaven to lowre upon us; finding no viſible ſuccour, and having no hope from the power inviſible; yea having reaſon to be diſcouraged with the fear of God's diſpleaſure. As he that hath a powerful enemy near, cannot abide in peace, without anxious ſuſpicion and fear; ſo he that is at variance with the Almighty, who is ever at hand, ready to croſs and puniſh him, what quiet of mind can he enjoy? *There is no peace to the wicked.*

2. The contemplation of our future ſtate is a ſovereign medicine to work contentedneſs, and to cure diſcontent: as diſcontent eaſily doth ſeiſe upon, and cleaveth faſt to Souls, which earneſtly do pore and dote upon theſe preſent things, which have in them nothing ſatisfactory or ſtable; ſo if we can raiſe our minds firmly to believe, ſeriouſly to conſider, and worthily to prize the future ſtate and its concernments, we can hardly ever be diſcontent in regard to theſe things. Conſidering heaven and its happineſs, how low and mean, how ſordid and vile, how unworthy of our care and our affection will theſe inferiour things appear? How very unconcerned ſhall we ſee our ſelves to be in them, and how eaſily thence ſhall we be content to want them? What, ſhall any of us be then ready to ſay, doth it concern me in what rank or garb I paſs my few days here? what conſiderable intereſt can I have in this uncertain and tranſitory ſtate? what is any loſs, any diſgrace, any croſs in this World to me, who am a Citizen of Heaven, who have a capacity and hope of the immenſe riches, the incorruptible glories, the perfect and endleſs joys of eternity? This was that which ſuſtained the holy *Apoſtles* in all their diſtreſſes; *For this cauſe* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *we faint not —— while we look not on the things which are ſeen, but on the things which are not ſeen, for the things which are ſeen are temporal, but the things which are not ſeen are eternal*; and *I reckon* (ſaith he again) *that the ſufferings of this preſent life are not worthy to be compared with the glory which ſhall be revealed in us.*

1 Theſſ. 4. 18. *Vid.* Naz. *Ep.* 201. (*ad* Theclam.)

2 Cor. 7. 31.

2 Cor. 4. 16. *&c.* 5 7.

Rom. 8. 18.

If

If likewiſe we do with faith and ſeriouſneſs conſider the diſmal ſtate below of thoſe, who are eternally ſecluded from all joy and bliſs, who are irrecoverably condemned to utter darkneſs, and the extremity of horrible pain, how tolerable, how pleaſant, how very happy will the meaneſt ſtate here appear to be? how vain a thing will it then ſeem to us to be to diſlike, or to be troubled with any worldly thing; to accompt any chance happening to us to be ſad, or diſaſtrous? What, ſhall we ſay then each of us, is this ſame loſs to the loſs of my Soul and all its comforts for ever? what is this want to the perpetual want of heavenly bliſs? what is this ſhort and faint pain to the cruel pangs of endleſs remorſe, to the *weeping and gnaſhing of teeth in outward darkneß, to everlaſting burnings*?

Thus infinitely ſilly and petty muſt all concernments of this life appear to him, who is poſſeſſed with the belief and conſideration of matters relating to the future ſtate; whence diſcontent in regard to them can hardly find acceſs to his mind.

3. Conſtant devotion is an excellent inſtrument and guard of content, an excellent remedy and fence againſt diſcontent.

It is ſuch in way of impetration, procuring the removal, or alleviation of our croſſes: For God hath promiſed that *he will give good things to thoſe that ask him*; *The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him in truth*; *he will fulfil the deſire of them that fear him*; *he alſo will hear their cry, and will ſave them. The poor man cryeth, and the Lord heareth him, and ſaveth him out of all his troubles*; the holy *Scripture* is full of ſuch declarations and promiſes aſſuring us of ſuccour from our diſtreſſes, upon our ſupplication to God; whence St. *Paul* thus adviſeth againſt all ſolicitude: *Be careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer, and ſupplication with thanksgiving, let your requeſt be made known to God*: *And* (addeth ſignifying the conſequence of this practice) *the peace of God, which paſſeth all underſtanding, ſhall keep your hearts and minds through Jeſus Chriſt.*

Matt. 7. 11. Pſal. 145. 18. Jam. 4. 8. Pſal. 34. 6. 107. 6.

Phil. 4. 7. (Pſal. 25. 15. 86. 1, 4, 17. 44. 23.)

It likewiſe performeth the ſame by procuring grace and aid from God, which may enable and diſpoſe us to bear all evils well, which is really much better than a removal of them; for that hence they become wholſome and profitable to us, and cauſes of preſent good, and grounds of future reward; thus when St. *Paul beſought God* for deliverance from his thorn in the fleſh, the return to him was; *My grace is ſufficient for thee*; *for my ſtrength is made perfect in weakneß*: It was a greater favour to receive an improvement of ſpiritual ſtrength, occaſioned by that croſs, then to be quite freed from it.

2 Cor. 12. 9. 1 Cor. 10. 13.

Devotion alſo hath immediately of it ſelf a ſpecial efficacy to produce content. As in any diſtreſs it is a great conſolation, that we can have recourſe to a good Friend, that we may diſcharge our cares and our reſentments into his boſome; that we may demand advice from him, and, if need be, requeſt his ſuccour; ſo much more it muſt be a great comfort, that we can in our need approach to God, who is infinitely the moſt faithful, the moſt affectionate, the moſt ſufficient Friend that can be; always moſt ready, moſt willing, moſt able to direct and to relieve us: He deſires, and delights, that *in the day of our trouble we ſhould ſeek him*; that *we ſhould pour forth our hearts before him*, that we ſhould *caſt our burthens*, and *our cares upon him*; that we ſhould upon all occaſions implore his guidance and aid: And complying with his deſires as we ſhall aſſuredly find a ſucceſsful event of our devotions, ſo we ſhall immediately enjoy great comfort and pleaſure in them.

Pſal. 77. 2. 27. 8. 105. 4. 62. 8. 1 Sam. 1. 15. Pſal. 55. 22. 1 Pet. 5. 7. Pſal. 5. 8. 27. 11. 31. 2. 43. 3. 139. 24. 143. 10. 61. 2. Jer. 31. 9.

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The *God of all conſolation* doth eſpecially by this chanel convey his com-
Pſal. 16. 11. forts into our hearts; his very preſence (that *preſence*, in which the *Pſalmiſt* ſaith *there is fulneſs of joy*) doth mightily warm and chear us; his Holy Spirit doth in our religious entercourſe with him inſinuate a lightſome ſerenity of mind, doth kindle ſweet and kindly affections, doth ſcatter the gloomy clouds of ſadneſs; practiſing it we ſhall be able to ſay
Pſal 94. 19. with the *Pſalmiſt*, *In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my ſoul.*

Humbly addreſſing our ſelves to God, and reverently converſing with him doth compoſe our minds, and charm our paſſions, doth ſweeten our humour, doth refreſh and raiſe our ſpirits, and ſo doth immediately breed and nouriſh contentedneſs.

It alſo ſtrengthneth our faith, and quickneth our hope in God, whereby
Iſa. 26. 3. we are enabled to ſupport our preſent evils, and peace of mind doth ſpring up within us.

Pſal. 73. 26. 69. 16. 23. 4. 71. 20. It enflameth our love unto God, in ſenſe of his gratious illapſes, thence rendring us willing to endure any want or pain for his ſake, or at his appointment.

It in fine doth miniſter a raviſhing delight, abundantly able to ſupply the defect of any other pleaſures, and to allay the ſmart of any pains whatever; rendring thereby the meaneſt eſtate more acceptable and pleaſant, than any proſperity without it can be. So that if we be truly devout we can hardly be diſcontent; It is diſcoſting from God by a neglect of devotion, or by a negligence therein, that doth expoſe us to the incurſions of worldly regret and ſorrow.

Theſe are general Remedies and Duties both in this and all other regards neceſſary, the which yet we may be induced to perform in contemplation of this happy fruit (contentedneſs) ariſing from them. Farther.

4. It ſerveth toward production of contentedneſs to reflect much upon our imperfection, unworthineſs and guilt; ſo as thereby to work in our hearts a lively ſenſe of them, and a hearty ſorrow for them; this will divert our ſadneſs into its right chanel, this will drown our leſſer grief by the influx of a greater. It is the nature of a greater apprehenſion or pain incumbent to extinguiſh in a manner, and ſwallow up the ſenſe of a leſſer, although in it ſelf grievous; as he that is under a fit of the ſtone doth ſcarce feel a pang of the gout; he that is aſſaulted by a wolf will not regard the biting of a flea. Whereas then of all evils and miſchiefs moral evils are incomparably far the greateſt, in nature the moſt ugly and abominable, in conſequence the moſt hurtful and horrible; ſeeing (in St. *Chryſoſtome*'s language) *Excepting ſin, there is nothing grievous or terrible among humane things; not poverty, not ſickneſs, not diſgrace, not that which ſeemeth the moſt extream of all evil, death it ſelf; thoſe being names only among ſuch as philoſophate, names of calamity, void of reality, but the real calamity this, to be at variance with God, and to doe that which diſpleaſeth him*; ſeeing evidently according to juſt eſtimation no evil beareth any proportion to the evil of Sin, if we have a due ſenſe thereof, we can hardly be affected with any other accident; If we can keep our minds intent upon the heinous nature, and the lamentable conſequences of Sin, all other evils cannot but ſeem exceedingly light and inconſiderable; we cannot but apprehend it a very ſilly and unhandſome thing to reſent

Οὐδὲν δεινὸν ἢ ἀνθρωπίνων ἀλλ' ἢ ἁμαρτία μόνη· ἢ πενία, ἢ νόσος, ἢ χῆ-δεις ἢ ἔκπτωσις, ἢ ἀτιμία, &c. Chryſ. ἀνδρ. ε' τ. 6.
Vid. ad Olymp. *Ep.* 13. *ad* Theod. 1.

reſent or regard them: What (ſhall we then judge) is poverty in compariſon to the want of a good conſcience? what is Sickneſs compared to diſtemper of mind, and decay of ſpiritual ſtrength? what is any diſappointment to the being defeated and overthrown by temptation? what any loſs to the being deprived of God's love and favour? what any diſgrace to the being out of eſteem and reſpect with God? what any unfaithfulneſs or inconſtancy of friends to having deſerted or betrayed our own ſoul? what can any danger ſignify to that of eternal miſery, incurred by offending God? what preſſure can weigh againſt the load of guilt, or what pain equal that of ſtinging remorſe? In fine, what condition can be ſo bad as that of a wretched Sinner? any caſe ſurely is tolerable, is deſirable, is lovely and ſweet in compariſon to this: Would to God, may a man in this caſe reaſonably ſay, that I were poor and forelorn as any beggar; that I were covered all over with botches and blains as any *Lazar*; that I were bound to paſs my days in an hoſpital or a dungeon; might I be chained to an oar, might I lye upon the rack, ſo I were clear and innocent: Such thoughts and affections if reflecting on our ſinful doings and ſtate do ſuggeſt and impreſs, what place can there be for reſentment of other petty croſſes?

Contrition alſo upon this ſcore is productive of a certain ſweetneſs and joy apt to quaſh or to allay all worldly grief: as *it worketh a ſalutary repentance not to be repented of*, ſo it therewith breedeth a ſatisfactory comfort, which doth ever attend repentance: He that is very ſenſible of his guilt, cannot but conſequently much value the remedy thereof, mercy; and thence earneſtly be moved to ſeek it; then in contemplation of divine goodneſs, and conſidering God's gratious promiſes, will be apt to conceive faith and hope, upon his imploring mercy, and reſolution to amend; thence will ſpring up a chearful ſatisfaction, ſo poſſeſſing the heart, as to expel or to exclude other diſpleaſures: A holy and a worldly ſadneſs cannot well conſiſt together.

2 Cor. 7. 10. *Vid.* Chryſ. *ad* Demet. *&* *ad* Steletch. *Tom.* 6.

5. Another good inſtrument of contentedneſs is ſedulous application of our minds to honeſt employment. Honeſt ſtudies and cares divert our minds, and drive ſad thoughts from them: They chear our ſpirits with wholeſome food and pleaſant entertainments; they yeild good fruits, and a ſucceſs accompanied with ſatisfaction, which will extinguiſh or temper diſcontent: While we are ſtudious or active, diſcontent cannot eaſily creep in, and ſoon will be ſtifled.

Idleneſs is the great mother and the nurſe of diſcontent; it layeth the mind open for melancholly conceits to enter; it yeildeth harbour to them, and entertainment there; it depriveth of all the remedies and allays which buſineſs affordeth.

Reciprocally diſcontent alſo begetteth idleneſs, and by it groweth: They are like ice and water, ariſing each out of the other: We ſhould therefore not ſuffer any ſadneſs ſo to encroach upon us, as to hinder us from attending to our buſineſs (the honeſt works and ſtudies of our calling) for it thereby will grow ſtronger and more hardly vincible.

Mœror me genuit.

6. A like expediment to remove diſcontent is good company. It not onely ſometimes miniſtreth advices and arguments for content, but raiſeth the drooping ſpirit, erecting it to a loving complaiſance, drawing it out towards others in expreſſions of kindneſs, and yeilding delight in thoſe which we receive from others, infecting us by a kind of contagion with good humour, and inſtilling pleaſant *Idea*'s into our fancy, agreeably diverting us from ſad and irkſome thoughts: Diſcontent affecteth retirement

Ἀγαθὴ ἡ παρηγόρησις ὅταν ἐπιμέρᾳ.

and

and ſolitude, as its element and food; good company partly ſtarveth it by ſmothering ſad thoughts, partly cureth it by exhilarating diſcourſe. No man hardly can find diſpleaſure, while friendly converſation entertaineth him; no man returneth from it without ſome refreſhment and eaſe of mind.

7. Having right and lowly conceits of our ſelves is a moſt ſure guardian and procurer of content: For anſwerable to a man's judgment of himſelf are his reſentments of the dealing he meeteth with from God or man. He that thinks meanly as he ought of himſelf, will not eaſily be offended at any thing; any thing, will he think, is good enough for me; I deſerve nothing from God, I cannot deſerve much of man; if I have any competence of proviſion for my life, any tolerable uſage, any reſpect, it is more than my due, I am bound to be thankful: But he that conceiteth highly (that is vainly) of himſelf, nothing will ſatisfie him; nothing, thinks he, is good enough for him, or anſwerable to his deſerts; no body can yeild him ſufficient reſpect; any ſmall neglect diſturbeth and enrageth him; he cannot endure that any man ſhould thwart his intereſt, ſhould croſs his humour, ſhould diſſent from his opinion; Hence ſeeing the world will not eaſily be induced to conceit of him as he doth of himſelf, nor to comply with his humours and pretences, it is impoſſible that he ſhould be content.

8. It conduceth to this purpoſe to contemplate and reſent the publick ſtate of things, the intereſt of the World, of our Country, of God's Church. The ſenſe of publick calamities will drown that of private, as unworthy to be conſidered or compared with them; The ſenſe of publick proſperity will allay that of particular misfortune. How (will a wiſe and good man ſay) can I deſire to proſper and flouriſh, while the State is in danger or diſtreſs? how can I grieve, ſeeing my Country is in good condition? is it juſt, is it handſome that I ſhould be a Non-conformiſt either in the publick ſorrow or joy? Indeed

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So to adhere in affection to any thing is an adulterous diſloyalty toward our Maker and beſt Friend; from which it is expedient that we ſhould be reclaimed; whence God (in juſt anger, or in kind mercy) will be apt to croſs us in our attempts to get it, or to deprive us of its poſſeſſion; whence the dipleaſure will follow, which always attendeth a ſeparation from things we love. But if we be ſuffered to obtain or to retain it,

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and ſolitude, as its element and food; good company partly ſtarveth it by ſmothering ſad thoughts, partly cureth it by exhilarating diſcourſe. No man hardly can find diſpleaſure, while friendly converſation entertaineth him; no man returneth from it without ſome refreſhment and eaſe of mind.

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reaſon dictateth, as experience diligently obſerved (by their fruits and conſequences) diſcovereth them to be, we ſhall have little cauſe to be affected by the want, or preſence of any ſuch thing which is wont to produce diſcontent.

12. We ſhould to this purpoſe take eſpecial care to ſearch out through our condition, and pick thence the good that is therein, making the beſt we can of it, enjoying and improving it; but what is inconvenient or offenſive therein declining it, diminiſhing it, tempering it ſo well as we may, always forbearing to aggravate it. There are in nature divers ſimples, which have in them ſome part, or ſome juice very noxious, which being ſevered and caſt away, the reſt becometh wholeſome food; neither indeed is there any thing in nature ſo venomous, but that from it by art and induſtry may be extracted ſomewhat medicinal, and of good uſe, when duly applied; ſo in moſt apparent evils lieth incloſed much good, which if we carefully ſeparate (caſting away the intermixed droſs and refuſe) we ſhall find benefit, and taſt comfort thence; there is nothing ſo throughly bad, as being well ordered, and opportunely miniſtred will not do us much good: So if from poverty we caſt away or bear quietly that which a little pincheth the ſenſe or grateth on the fancy, and enjoy the undiſtractedneſs of mind, the liberty, the leiſure, the health, the ſecurity from envy, obloquy, ſtrife, which it affordeth, how ſatisfactory may it become to us? The like conveniencies are in diſgrace, diſappointment, and other ſuch evils, which being improved may endear them to us: Even Sin it ſelf (the worſt of evils, the onely true evil) may yeild great benefits to us; it may render us ſober and lowly in our own eyes, devout in imploring mercy, and thankful to God for it; merciful and charitable toward others in our opinions and cenſures; more laborious in our good practice, and watchful over our ſteps: And if this deadly poiſon well adminiſtred yeildeth effects ſo exceedingly beneficial and ſalutary, what may other harmleſs (though unhandſome, and unpleaſant) things doe, being skilfully managed?

13. It is a moſt effectual means of procuring content, and curing diſcontent, to rowſe and fortify our faith in God, by, with moſt ſerious attention, reflecting upon the arguments and experiments, which aſſure us concerning God's particular providence over all, over us. It is really infidelity (in whole, or in part, no faith, or a ſmall and weak faith) which is at the root, as of all ſin, ſo particularly of diſcontent: For how is it poſſible, did we firmly believe, and with any meaſure of attention conſider that God taketh care of us, that he tendereth our good, that he is ready at hand to ſuccour us, (how then, I ſay, is it poſſible) that we ſhould fear any want, or grievouſly reſent any thing incident? But we like St. *Peter* are ὀλιγόπιστοι, of *little faith*, therefore we cannot *walk on the ſea*; but in deſpair ſink down: Sometimes our faith is buried in oblivion or careleſneſs; we forget, or mind not that there is a Providence; but look on things as if they fell out caſually or fatally; thence expect no redreſs from Heaven, ſo tumble into deſpair and diſconſolateneſs. Sometimes becauſe God doth not in our time and our way relieve us or gratifie us we ſlip into profane doubt, queſtioning in our hearts whether he doth indeed regard us, or whether any relief is to be expected from him; not conſidering, that onely God can tell when, and how it is beſt to proceed; that often it is not expedient our wiſhes ſhould be granted; that we are not wiſe enough, or juſt enough to appoint or chuſe for our ſelves; that it is impoſſible for God to gratify every man; that it would be a

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mad World, if God in his government thereof ſhould ſatisfie all our deſires.

We forget how often God hath ſuccoured us in our needs and ſtraits, how continually he hath provided for us; how patiently and mercifully he hath born with us, what miracles of bounty and mercy he hath performed in our behalf; we are like that diſtruſtful and inconſiderate people, who *remembred not the hand of God, nor the day when he delivered them*; *remembred not the multitude of his mercies*; but *ſoon forgat his works, and waited not for his counſel*; *They forgat God their Saviour, who had done great things in Egypt, wondrous works in the land of Ham, and terrible things in the red Sea.* Pſal. 78 42. Pſal. 106. 7, 13, 21.

From ſuch diſpoſitions in us our diſcontents do ſpring; and we cannot cure them, but by recollecting our ſelves from ſuch forgetfulneſs and negligence; by ſhaking off ſuch wicked doubts and diſtruſts; by fixing our hearts and hopes on him, who alone can help us; who is *our ſtrength, the ſtrength of our heart, of our life, of our ſalvation.* Pſal. 22. 19. 46. 1. 81. 1. 59. 7. 144. 1. Pſal. 73. 26. 27. 1. 140. 7.

Of him (to conclude) let us humbly implore, that he in mercy would beſtow upon us grace to ſubmit in all things to his Will, to acquieſce in all his diſpenſations, gladly to embrace and undergo whatever he allotteth to us; in every condition, and for all events befalling us heartily to adore, thank and bleſs him: Even ſo to the Ever Bleſſed God, our gratious maker and preſerver, be eternally rendred all glory, thankſgiving and praiſe. *Amen.*

SERMON X.

Of Patience.

1 PET. 2. 21.

Becauſe alſo Chriſt ſuffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye ſhould follow his ſteps.

IN theſe Words two things appear eſpecially obſervable; a duty implied (the *duty* of *patience*) and a reaſon expreſſed, which enforceth the practice of that duty (the *example* of *Chriſt.*) We ſhall (uſing no more Preface, or circumſtance) firſt briefly, in way of explication and direction, touch the duty it ſelf, then more largely deſcribe, and urge the example.

The Word *patience* hath, in common uſage, a double meaning, taken from the reſpect it hath unto two ſorts of objects, ſomewhat different. As it reſpecteth provocations to anger, and revenge by injuries, or diſcourteſies

teſies, it ſignifieth a diſpoſition of mind to bear them with charitable meekneſs; as it relateth to adverſities and croſſes diſpoſed to us by providence, it importeth a pious undergoing and ſuſtaining them. That both theſe kinds of patience may here be underſtood, we may, conſulting and conſidering the context, eaſily diſcern: that which immediately precedeth, *If when ye do well, and ſuffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable to God*, relateth to good endurance of adverſity; that which preſently followeth, *who when he was reviled, reviled not again, when he ſuffered he threatned not*, referreth to meek comporting with provocations: The Text therefore, as it looketh backward, doth recommend the patience of adverſities, as forward, the patience of contumelies. But ſeeing both theſe objects are reducible to one more general, comprizing both, that is, things ſeeming evil to us, or offenſive to our ſenſe, we may ſo explicate the duty of patience, as to include them both.

Patience then is that vertue, which qualifieth us to bear all conditions, and all events, by God's diſpoſal incident to us, with ſuch apprehenſions and perſwaſions of mind, ſuch diſpoſitions and affections of heart, ſuch external deportments, and practices of life as God requireth, and good reaſon directeth. Its nature will, I conceive, be underſtood beſt by conſidering the chief acts which it produceth, and wherein eſpecially the practice thereof conſiſteth; the which briefly are theſe.

1. A thorough perſwaſion, that nothing befalleth us by fate, or by chance, or by the mere agency of inferiour cauſes, but that all proceedeth from the diſpenſation, or with the allowance of God, (that, *Affliction doth not come forth of the duſt, nor doth trouble ſpring out of the ground*; but that all, both *good and evil proceedeth out of the mouth of the moſt high*) according as *David* reflected, when *Shimei* reviled him; *Let him* (ſaith the good King) *curſe, becauſe the Lord hath ſaid unto him, Curſe David*; and as *Job*, when he was ſpoiled of all his goods, acknowledged, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away.*

Job 5. 6. Lam. 3. 38. 2 Sam. 16. 10. Job 1. 21.

2. A firm belief, that all occurrences (however adverſe, and croſs to our deſires) are well conſiſtent with the juſtice, wiſdom and goodneſs of God; ſo that we cannot reaſonably diſapprove, repine at, or complain of them; but are bound and ready to avow with the *Pſalmiſt*, that *All his paths are mercy and truth*; *He is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works*; to judge and ſay with *Hezekiah*, *Good is the word of the Lord, which thou haſt ſpoken*; to confeſs with *David* unto him, *I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right*; *and that thou in faithfulneſs haſt afflicted me.*

Pſal. 25. 10. 145. 17. 2 Kings 20. 19. Pſal. 119. 75.

3. A full ſatisfaction of mind, that all (even the moſt bitter, and ſad accidents) do (according to God's purpoſe) tend, and conduce to our good; acknowledging the truth of thoſe divine Aphoriſms; *Happy is the man whom God correcteth*; *whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, even as a Father the Son, in whom he delighteth. As many as I love I rebuke, and chaſten.*

Job 5. 17. Jam. 1. 12. Prov. 3. 12. Heb. 12. 5. Rev. 3. 19.

4. An entire ſubmiſſion, and reſignation of our wills to the will of God; ſuppreſſing all rebellious inſurrections, and grievous reſentments of heart againſt his providence; which may diſpoſe us heartily to ſay after our *Lord*, *Let not my will, but thine be done*; with good *Eli*, *It is the Lord, Let him do what ſeemeth him good*; with *David*, *Here I am, let him do to me as ſeemeth good to him*; yea even with *Socrates*, *If ſo it pleaſeth God, ſo let it be.*

Luk. 22. 42. 1 Sam. 3. 18. 2 Sam. 15. 26.

Bearing adverſities calmly, chearfully and courageouſly; ſo as not to be diſcompoſed with anger, or grief; not to be put out of humour, not

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to be dejected or disheartened; but in our disposition of mind to resemble the primitive Saints, who were ὡς λυπούμενοι, ἀεὶ δὲ χαίροντες, *as grieved, but always rejoicing*; who *took joyfully the spoiling of their goods*, who *accompted it all joy when they fell into divers tribulations.* 2 Cor. 6. 10. Heb. 10. 34. Jam. 1. 2.

6. A hopeful confidence in God for the removal or easement of our afflictions, and for his gratious aid to support them well; agreeable to those good rules and precepts? *It is good that a man should both hope, and wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord*; *Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him*; *wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart*; according to the pattern of *David*, who, in such a case, thus roused and staid himself: *Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance*; and after the holy *Apostles*, who in their most forlorn estate could say, *We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed*; *we are perplexed, but not in despair*; *persecuted, but not forsaken*; *cast down, but not destroyed.* Lam. 3. 26. Psal. 37. 7. 27. 14. Psal. 42. 5. 2 Cor. 4. 8.

7. A willingness to continue, during God's pleasure, in our afflicted state, without weariness, or irksome longings for alteration; according to that advice of the *Wiseman*, *My son, despise not the chastning of the Lord, neither be weary of his correction*; and that of the *Apostle*, back'd with our Lord's example; *Considering him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest we be weary, and faint in our minds.* Prov. 3. 11. Heb. 12. 3.

8. A lowly frame of mind (that is, being sober in our conceits of our selves, sensible of our unworthiness, and meanness, of our natural frailty, penury and wretchedness; of our manifold defects and miscarriages in practice; being meek and gentle, tender and pliable in our temper and frame of spirit; being deeply affected with reverence and dread toward the awful majesty, mighty power, perfect justice and sanctity of God; all this) wrought by our adversity effectually, according to its design, quelling our haughty stomach, softning our hard hearts, mitigating our peevish humours; according to St. *Peter*'s injunction, *Be humbled under the mighty hand of God*; and God's own approbation joined with a gratious promise, *To this man will I look*; *even to him that is of a poor and contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.* 1 Pet. 5. 6. Ez. 66. 2.

9. Restraining our tongues from all discontentful complaints, and murmurings, all profane, harsh, unsavoury expressions, importing displeasure, or dissatisfaction in God's dealing toward us, arguing desperation or distrust in him; such as were those of the impatient and incredulous *Israelites*; *They spake against God, and said, can God furnish a table in the wilderness? behold he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed*; *can he give bread also, can he provide flesh for his people?* Such as they used, of whom the *Prophet* said —— *When they shall be hungry, they will fret themselves, and curse their King, and their God*; such as they were guilty of, whom St. *Jude* calleth γογγυστὰς καὶ μεμψιμοίρους, *murmurers, and querulous persons* (or such as found fault with their lot) that which is stiled, *charging God foolishly*; for abstaining from which (notwithstanding the pressure of his most grievous calamities) *Job* is commended (where 'tis said, *Job sinned not, neither charged God foolishly*) that which the *Prophet* condemneth as unreasonable in that expostulation; *Wherefore doth the living man complain?* In such cases we should smother our passions in a still and silent demeanour, as the *Psalmist* advised, and as he practised himself: *I was dumb* (saith he) *and opened not my mouth, because it was thy doings.* Yea contrariwise patience requireth. Psal. 78. 19, 20. Isa. 8. 21. Jude 16. Job 1. 22. Lam. 3. 39. Psal. 37. 7. 46. 10. 4. 4. Psal. 39. 9.

10. Blessing

10. Bleſſing and praiſing God (that is, declaring our hearty ſatisfaction in God's proceedings with us, acknowledging his wiſdom, juſtice and goodneſs therein, expreſſing a grateful ſenſe thereof, as wholſome and beneficial to us) in conformity to *Job*, who, upon the loſs of all his comforts, did thus vent his mind: *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; bleſſed be the name of the Lord.*

Job 1. 21.

11. Abſtaining from all irregular and unworthy courſes toward the removal, or redreſs of our croſſes; chuſing rather to abide quietly under their preſſure, than by any unwarrantable means to relieve or relaxe our ſelves; contentedly wearing, rather than violently *breaking our yoke*, or *burſting our bonds*; rather continuing poor, than ſtriving to enrich our ſelves by fraud or rapine; rather lying under contempt, than by ſinful or ſordid compliances attempting to gain the favour and reſpect of men; rather embracing the meaneſt condition, than labouring by any turbulent, unjuſt, or uncharitable practices to amplifie our eſtate; rather enduring any inconvenience, or diſtreſs, than *ſetting our faces toward Egypt*, or having recourſe to any ſuccour, which God diſalloweth; according to what is replied in that reprehenſion of St. *Paul, Now therefore it is utterly a fault among you, becauſe ye go to law one with another; Why do ye not rather take wrong; why do ye not rather ſuffer your ſelves to be defrauded?* and in that advice of St. *Peter; Let them that ſuffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their ſouls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful creatour.*

Jer. 5. 5.

Jer. 42. 15.

1 Cor. 6. 7.

1 Pet. 4. 19.

12. A fair behaviour toward the inſtruments and abettors of our affliction; thoſe who brought us into it, or who detain us under it, by keeping off relief, or ſparing to yeild the ſuccour which we might expect; the forbearing to expreſs any wrath or diſpleaſure, to exerciſe any revenge, to retain any grudge, or enmity toward them; but rather even upon that ſcore bearing good-will, and ſhewing kindneſs unto them; unto them, not onely as to our brethren, whom according to the general law of charity we are bound to love, but as to the Servants of God in this particular caſe, or as to the inſtruments of his pleaſure toward us, conſidering that by maligning or miſchiefing them, we do ſignifie ill reſentment of God's dealings with us, and in effect through their ſides, do wound his Providence: Thus did the *pious King* demean himſelf, when he was bitterly reproached, and curſed by *Shimei*; not ſuffering (upon this accompt) any harm or requital to be offered to him; thus did the holy *Apoſtles*, who *being reviled did bleſs, being perſecuted did bear it, being defamed did intreat*; thus did our *Lord* deport himſelf toward his ſpiteful adverſaries, who *being reviled did not revile again; when he ſuffered did not threaten, but committed it to him that judgeth righteouſly.*

2 Sam. 16. 7.

1 Cor. 4. 12.

1 Pet. 2. 23. 3 9.

13. Particularly in regard to thoſe, who by injurious and offenſive uſage, do provoke us; patience importeth,

1. That we be not haſtily, over-eaſily, not immoderately, not pertinaciouſly incenſed with anger toward them; according to thoſe divine Precepts, and Aphoriſms; *Be ſlow to wrath; Be not haſty in thy ſpirit to be angry; for anger reſteth in the boſome of fools. Give place to wrath* (that is remove it.) *Let all bitterneſs, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil ſpeaking be put away from you, with all malice. Ceaſe from anger, let go diſpleaſure, fret not thy ſelf any-wiſe to do evil.*

Jam. 1. 19. Eccleſ. 7. 9. Prov. 16. 32. 14, 17, 29. Rom. 12. 19. Eph. 4. 31, 26. Coloſſ. 3. 8. Matt. 5. 21, 24. Pſal. 37. 8.

2. That we do not in our hears harbour any ill-will, or ill-wiſhes, or ill-

ill-designs toward them, but that we truly desire their good, and purpose to further it, as we shall have ability and occasion; according to that Law (even charged on the *Jews*) *Thou shalt not bear any grudge against the children of thy people; but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self*; and according to that noble command of our Saviour; *Love your enemies, pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.* Levit. 19. 18. Matt. 5. 44. Luk. 6. 27.

3. That in effect we do not execute any revenge, or for requital do any mischief to them, either in word or deed; but for their reproaches exchange blessings (or good words and wishes) for their outrages repay benefits, and good turns; according to those Evangelical Rules; *Doe good to them that hate you, Bless them that curse you: Bless them that persecute you, bless and curse not: See that none render evil for evil: Be pitiful, be courteous, not rendring evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing: If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: Say not I will do to him as he hath done to me; I will render to the man according to his work: Say thou not I will recompense evil, but wait on the Lord, and he shall save thee.* Matt. 5. 44, 39. Rom. 12. 14. 1 Thess. 5. 15. 1 Pet. 3. 9. Prov. 25. 21. Rom. 12. 20. Prov. 24. 29. 20. 22.

14. In fine, Patience doth include and produce a general meekness and kindness of affection, together with an enlarged sweetness, and pleasantness in conversation and carriage toward all men; implying, that, how hard soever our case, how sorry or sad our condition is, we are not therefore angry with the World, because we do not thrive, or flourish in it; that we are not dissatisfied, or disgusted with the prosperous estate of other men; that we are not become sullen or froward toward any man, because his fortune excelleth ours; but that rather we do *rejoice with them that rejoice*; we do find complacence, and delight in their good success, we borrow satisfaction and pleasure from their enjoyments. Rom. 12. 15.

In these and the like acts, the practice of this vertue (a vertue, which all men, in this state of inward weakness, and outward trouble, shall have much need and frequent occasion to exercise) consisteth; unto which practice, even Philosophy, natural reason, and common sense do suggest many inducements; the tenour of our holy Faith and Religion do supply more and better; but nothing can more clearly direct, or more powerfully excite thereto, than that admirable example, by which our Text doth enforce it: Some principal of those rational inducements we shall cursorily touch, then insist upon this example.

It will generally induce us to bear patiently all things incident, if we consider, That it is the natural right and prerogative of God to dispose of all things, to assign our station here, and allot our portion to us; whence it is a most wrongful insolence in us, by complaining of our state, to contest his right, or impeach his management thereof; That we are obliged to God's free bounty for numberless great benefits and favours; whence it is vile ingratitude to be displeased for the want of some lesser inconveniences; That God having undertaken, and promised to support and succour us, it is a heinous affront to distrust him, and consequently to be dissatisfied with our condition; That seeing God doth infinitely better understand what is good for us, than we can do; he is better affected toward us, and more truly loveth us than we do our selves; he with an unquestionable right hath an uncontrolable power to dispose of us, it is most reasonable to acquiesce in his choice of our state; That since we have no claim to any good, or any pleasure, and thence in withholding any, no wrong is done to us, 'tis unjust and frivolous to murmur, or grumble; since we are, by nature, God's servants, it is fit the appointment of our rank,

rank, our garb, our diet, all our accommodations, and employments in his family, ſhould be left entirely to his diſcretion and pleaſure; That we being grievous Sinners, *leſs than the leaſt of God's mercies*, meriting no good, but deſerving ſore puniſhment from him, it is juſt, that we ſhould be highly content and thankful for any thing on this ſide death and damnation; That our afflictions, being the natural fruits and reſults of our choice, or voluntary miſcarriages, it is reaſonable we ſhould blame our ſelves rather than pick quarrels with Providence for them. That our condition, be it what it will, cannot, being duly eſtimated, be extremely bad, or inſupportably grievous; for that as no condition here is perfectly and purely good (not deficient in ſome accommodations, not blended with ſome troubles) ſo there is none that hath not its conveniences and comforts; for that it is our fond conceits, our froward humours, our perverſe behaviours, which create the miſchiefs adherent to any ſtate; for that alſo how forelorn ſoever our caſe is, we cannot fail, if we pleaſe, of a capacity to enjoy goods far more than countervailing all poſſible want of theſe goods, or preſence of theſe evils; we may have the uſe of our reaſon, a good conſcience, hope in God, aſſurance of God's love and favour, abundance of ſpiritual bleſſings here, and a certain title to eternal glory and bliſs hereafter; which if we can have, our condition cannot be deemed uncomfortable. That indeed our adverſity is a thing very good and wholſome, very profitable and deſirable, as a means of breeding, improving and exerciſing the beſt vertues, of preparing us for, and entitling us to the beſt rewards. That our ſtate cannot ever be deſperate, our adverſity probably may not be laſting (there being no connexion between the preſent and the future, viciſſitudes being frequent, all things depending on the arbitrary diſpenſation of God, who doth always pity us, and is apt to relieve us.) That however our affliction will not outlive our ſelves, and certainly muſt ſoon expire with our life. That this World is not a place of perfect convenience, or pure delight; we come not hither to do our will, or enjoy our pleaſure, we are not born to make laws, or pick our condition here; but that *trouble* is natural and proper to us (*We are born thereto, as the ſparks flie upwards.*) *No tribulation ſeiſeth us, but ſuch as is humane*; whence 'tis reaſonable that we contentedly bear the croſſes ſutable to our nature and ſtate. That no adverſity is in kind, or degree, peculiar to us, but if we ſurvey the conditions of other men (of our brethren every where, of our neighbours all about us) and compare our caſe with theirs, we ſhall find, that we have many conſorts, and aſſociates in adverſity, moſt as ill, many far worſe beſtead than our ſelves; whence it muſt be a great fondneſs and perverſeneſs to be diſpleaſed that we are not exempted from, but expoſed to bear a ſhare in the common troubles and burthens of mankind. That it hath particularly been the lot of the beſt men (perſons moſt excellent in vertue, and moſt deep in God's favour) to ſuſtain adverſity; and it therefore becometh us willingly and chearfully to accept it. That, in fine, patience it ſelf is the beſt remedy to eaſe us in, to reſcue us from adverſity, for it cannot much annoy us, if we bear it patiently, God will, in mercy, remove it, if we pleaſe him, by demeaning our ſelves well under it; but that impatience doth not at all conduce to our relief, doth indeed exaſperate, and augment our pain: Such conſiderations may induce us to a patience in general reſpecting all ſorts of evils.

Job 5. 7.
1 Cor. 10. 13.

There are alſo reaſons particularly diſpoſing to bear injuries and contumelies from men calmly and meekly, without immoderate wrath, rancorous

rous hatred, or ſpiteful revenge toward them: Becauſe they do proceed from divine providence, diſpoſing or permitting them (for the trial of our patience, the abaſing our pride, the exerciſing of ſome other vertues, or for other good purpoſes) to fall upon us: Becauſe vindication of miſdemeanours committed againſt us doth not appertain to us; we not being competent Judges of them, nor rightful executours of the puniſhments due to them; God having reſerved to himſelf the right of deciſion, and power of execution: *Vengeance is mine, ſaith the Lord, I will repay it.* Rom. 12. 19, Heb. 10. 30. Becauſe we are obliged to interpret charitably the actions of our neighbour, ſuppoſing his miſcarriages to proceed from infirmity, from miſtake, or from ſome cauſe, which we ſhould be rather inclinable to excuſe, than to proſecute with hatred, or revenge. Becauſe indeed our neighbours moſt culpable offences, as iſſuing from diſtemper of mind, are more reaſonably the objects of compaſſion, and charity, than of anger, or ill-will. Becauſe we are bound to forgive all injuries by the command of God, and in conformity to his example, who paſſeth by innumerable moſt heinous offences committed againſt himſelf: *Gratious is the Lord, and full of compaſſion, ſlow to anger, and of great mercy; long-ſuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth*; ſo muſt we be alſo, if we will be like him, or pleaſe him. Becauſe we our ſelves, being ſubject to incur the ſame faults in kind, or greater in value, do need much pardon, and ſhould thence be ready to allow it unto others; both in equity, and in gratitude toward God; leſt that in the Goſpel be applied to us; *O thou wicked ſervant, I forgave thee all that debt, becauſe thou deſiredſt me; Shouldſt not thou alſo have had compaſſion upon thy fellow ſervant, even as I had pity on thee?* Becauſe God hath made it a neceſſary condition of our obtaining mercy; promiſing us favour if we yeild it, menacing us extremity, if we refuſe it: *If ye forgive men their treſpaſſes, our heavenly father will alſo forgive you; But if ye forgive not men their treſpaſſes, neither will your father forgive your treſpaſſes.* Becauſe our neighbour ſuffering by our revenge in any manner (in his body, intereſt, or reputation) doth not any-wiſe profit us, or benefit our eſtate, but needleſly doth multiply and encreaſe the ſtock of miſchief in the World; yea commonly doth bring farther evil upon our ſelves, provoking him to go on in offending us, rendring him more implacably bent againſt us, engaging us conſequently deeper in ſtrife and trouble: Becauſe no wrong, no diſgrace, no prejudice we can receive from men is of much conſequence to us, if our mind be not diſorder'd, if we are free from thoſe bad paſſions, which really are the worſt evils that can befal us. Becauſe, in fine, impatience it ſelf is inſignificant, and ineffectual to any good purpoſe; or rather produceth ill effects; It doth not cure our wound, or aſſwage our grief; it removeth no inconvenience, nor repaireth any damage we have received; but rather enflameth our diſtemper, and aggravateth our pain; more really indeed moleſting and hurting us, than the injury or diſcourteſie which cauſeth it: Thus briefly doth reaſon dictate to us the practice of all patience.

Pſal. 145. 8. 86. 15.

Matt. 18. 32.

Matt. 6. 14. Eccluſ 8. 2. Mat. 18. 35. Mark 11. 25.

Idcirco qui's te lædit ut doleas, quia fructus lædentis in dolore læſi eſt. Tert. *de pat.* 8.

Si patientiæ incubabo, non dolebo; ſi non dolebo, ulciſci non deſiderabo. Ib. 10.

But the example propoſed by the *Apoſtle* here, and otherwhere by St. *Paul* (*Let the ſame mind be in you, which was alſo in Chriſt Jeſus* ——) by the *Apoſtle* to the *Hebrews* (*Let us run with patience the race that is ſet before us, Looking unto Jeſus the authour and finiſher of our faith* ——) by our Lord himſelf (*Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly*) that doth in a more lively manner expreſs how in ſuch caſes we ſhould deport our ſelves, and moſt ſtrongly engageth us to comply with duties of this nature. Let us

Phil. 2. 5. Heb. 12. 1, 2. Matt. 11. 29.

rank, our garb, our diet, all our accommodations, and employments in his family, ſhould be left entirely to his diſcretion and pleaſure; That we being grievous Sinners, *leſs than the leaſt of God's mercies*, meriting no good, but deſerving ſore puniſhment from him, it is juſt, that we ſhould be highly content and thankful for any thing on this ſide death and damnation; That our afflictions, being the natural fruits and reſults of our choice, or voluntary miſcarriages, it is reaſonable we ſhould blame our ſelves rather than pick quarrels with Providence for them. That our condition, be it what it will, cannot, being duly eſtimated, be extremely bad, or inſupportably grievous; for that as no condition here is perfectly and purely good (not deficient in ſome accommodations, not blended with ſome troubles) ſo there is none that hath not its conveniences and comforts; for that it is our fond conceits, our froward humours, our perverſe behaviours, which create the miſchiefs adherent to any ſtate; for that alſo how forelorn ſoever our caſe is, we cannot fail, if we pleaſe, of a capacity to enjoy goods far more than countervailing all poſſible want of theſe goods, or preſence of theſe evils; we may have the uſe of our reaſon, a good conſcience, hope in God, aſſurance of God's love and favour, abundance of ſpiritual bleſſings here, and a certain title to eternal glory and bliſs hereafter; which if we can have, our condition cannot be deemed uncomfortable. That indeed our adverſity is a thing very good and wholſome, very profitable and deſirable, as a means of breeding, improving and exerciſing the beſt vertues, of preparing us for, and entitling us to the beſt rewards. That our ſtate cannot ever be deſperate, our adverſity probably may not be laſting (there being no connexion between the preſent and the future, viciſſitudes being frequent, all things depending on the arbitrary diſpenſation of God, who doth always pity us, and is apt to relieve us.) That however our affliction will not outlive our ſelves, and certainly muſt ſoon expire with our life. That this World is not a place of perfect convenience, or pure delight; we come not hither to do our will, or enjoy our pleaſure, we are not born to make laws, or pick our condition here; but that *trouble* is natural and proper to us (*We* Job 5. 7. *are born thereto, as the ſparks flie upwards.*) *No tribulation ſeiſeth us, but* 1 Cor. 10. 13. *ſuch as is humane*; whence 'tis reaſonable that we contentedly bear the croſſes ſutable to our nature and ſtate. That no adverſity is in kind, or degree, peculiar to us, but if we ſurvey the conditions of other men (of our brethren every where, of our neighbours all about us) and compare our caſe with theirs, we ſhall find, that we have many conſorts, and aſſociates in adverſity, moſt as ill, many far worſe beſtead than our ſelves; whence it muſt be a great fondneſs and perverſeneſs to be diſpleaſed that we are not exempted from, but expoſed to bear a ſhare in the common troubles and burthens of mankind. That it hath particularly been the lot of the beſt men (perſons moſt excellent in vertue, and moſt deep in God's favour) to ſuſtain adverſity; and it therefore becometh us willingly and chearfully to accept it. That, in fine, patience it ſelf is the beſt remedy to eaſe us in, to reſcue us from adverſity, for it cannot much annoy us, if we bear it patiently; God will, in mercy, remove it, if we pleaſe him, by demeaning our ſelves well under it; but that impatience doth not at all conduce to our relief, doth indeed exaſperate, and augment our pain: Such conſiderations may induce us to a patience in general reſpecting all ſorts of evils.

There are alſo reaſons particularly diſpoſing to bear injuries and contumelies from men calmly and meekly, without immoderate wrath, rancorous

rous hatred, or ſpiteful revenge toward them: Becauſe they do proceed from divine providence, diſpoſing or permitting them (for the trial of our patience, the abaſing our pride, the exerciſing of ſome other vertues, or for other good purpoſes) to fall upon us: Becauſe vindication of miſdemeanours committed againſt us doth not appertain to us; we not being competent Judges of them, nor rightful executours of the puniſhments due to them; God having reſerved to himſelf the right of deciſion, and power of execution: *Vengeance is mine, ſaith the Lord, I will repay it.* Rom. 12. 19, Heb. 10. 30. Becauſe we are obliged to interpret charitably the actions of our neighbour, ſuppoſing his miſcarriages to proceed from infirmity, from miſtake, or from ſome cauſe, which we ſhould be rather inclinable to excuſe, than to proſecute with hatred, or revenge. Becauſe indeed our neighbours moſt culpable offences, as iſſuing from diſtemper of mind, are more reaſonably the objects of compaſſion, and charity, than of anger, or ill-will. Becauſe we are bound to forgive all injuries by the command of God, and in conformity to his example, who paſſeth by innumerable moſt heinous offences committed againſt himſelf: *Gratious is the Lord, and full of compaſſion, ſlow to anger, and of great mercy; long-ſuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth*; ſo muſt we be alſo, if we will be like him, or pleaſe him. Becauſe we our ſelves, being ſubject to incur the ſame faults in kind, or greater in value, do need much pardon, and ſhould thence be ready to allow it unto others; both in equity, and in gratitude toward God; leſt that in the Goſpel be applied to us; *O thou wicked ſervant, I forgave thee all that debt, becauſe thou deſiredſt me; Shouldſt not thou alſo have had compaſſion upon thy fellow ſervant, even as I had pity on thee?* Becauſe God hath made it a neceſſary condition of our obtaining mercy; promiſing us favour if we yeild it, menacing us extremity, if we refuſe it: *If ye forgive men their treſpaſſes, our heavenly father will alſo forgive you; But if ye forgive not men their treſpaſſes, neither will your father forgive your treſpaſſes.* Becauſe our neighbour ſuffering by our revenge in any manner (in his body, intereſt, or reputation) doth not any-wiſe profit us, or benefit our eſtate, but needleſly doth multiply and encreaſe the ſtock of miſchief in the World; yea commonly doth bring farther evil upon our ſelves, provoking him to go on in offending us, rendring him more implacably bent againſt us, engaging us conſequently deeper in ſtrife and trouble: Becauſe no wrong, no diſgrace, no prejudice we can receive from men is of much conſequence to us, if our mind be not diſorder'd, if we are free from thoſe bad paſſions, which really are the worſt evils that can befal us. Becauſe, in fine, impatience it ſelf is inſignificant, and ineffectual to any good purpoſe; or rather produceth ill effects; It doth not cure our wound, or aſſwage our grief; it removeth no inconvenience, nor repaireth any damage we have received; but rather enflameth our diſtemper, and aggravateth our pain; more really indeed moleſting and hurting us, than the injury or diſcourteſie which cauſeth it: Thus briefly doth reaſon dictate to us the practice of all patience.

Rom. 12. 19, Heb. 10. 30. Deut. 32. 35, 36. *Vid.* Tert. *de pat. cap.* 10.

Pſal. 145. 8. 86. 15.

Matt. 18. 32.

Matt. 6. 14. Eccluſ 8. 2. Mat. 18. 35. Mark 11. 25.

Idcirco qui's te lædit ut doleas, quia fructus lædentis in dolore læſi eſt. Tert. *de pat.* 8.

Si patientiæ incubabo, non dolebo; ſi non dolebo, ulciſci non deſiderabo. Ib. 10.

But the example propoſed by the *Apoſtle* here, and otherwhere by St. *Paul* (*Let the ſame mind be in you, which was alſo in Chriſt Jeſus* ——) by the *Apoſtle* to the *Hebrews* (*Let us run with patience the race that is ſet before us, Looking unto Jeſus the authour and finiſher of our faith* ——) by our Lord himſelf (*Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly*) that doth in a more lively manner expreſs how in ſuch caſes we ſhould deport our ſelves, and moſt ſtrongly engageth us to comply with duties of this nature. Let us

Phil. 2. 5. Heb. 12. 1, 2. Matt. 11. 29.

now therefore deſcribe it, and recommend it to your conſideration.

Vid. Tertull. *de Pat. c.* 3. Cypr. *de Pat. T.* 2. *p.* 315. Iſ. 53. 3.

The example of our Lord was indeed in this kind the moſt remarkable that ever was preſented, the moſt perfect that can be imagined: He was, above all expreſſion, *a man of ſorrows and acquainted with grief*; he did undertake, as to perform the beſt works, ſo to endure the worſt accidents, to which humane nature is ſubject; his whole life being no other than one continual exerciſe of patience, and meekneſs, in all the parts, and to the utmoſt degrees of them: If we trace the footſteps of his life, from the ſordid Manger to the bloudy Croſs, we ſhall not be able to obſerve any matter of complacence, ſcarce any of comfort (in reſpect to his natural or worldly ſtate) to have befallen him.

Matt. 13. 55. Mark 6. 3.

His parentage was mean, to appearance, and his birth, in all exteriour circumſtances, deſpicable: *Is not this the Carpenter's Son?* were words of contempt and offence, upon all occaſions thrown upon him.

Matt. 8. 20.

His life was ſpent not onely in continual labour, and reſtleſs travel, but in hard poverty, yea in extream penury, beneath the ſtate, not onely of the meaneſt Men, but of the moſt ſhifting Beaſts: *The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have neſts, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.*

Matt. 21. 18, 19. *Nullius menſam, tectumve deſpixit.* Tert. 2 Cor. 8. 9.

For his neceſſary ſubſiſtence we find him often deſtitute of ordinary proviſion (as when he ſought food from the barren Fig-tree) often indebted for it to the courteſie, and (as it were) alms of the vileſt people, of *Publicans and Sinners*: ſo δι ἡμᾶς ἐπτώχευσεν *he was* (as the *Apoſtle* ſaith) *a beggar for us.*

Yet may we never perceive him any-wiſe diſcontented with, or complaining of his condition; not diſcouraged, or depreſſed in ſpirit thereby, not ſolicitouſly endeavouring any correction or change thereof; but willingly embracing it, heartily acquieſcing therein; and, notwithſtanding all its inconveniences, chearfully diſcharging his duties, vigorouſly purſuing his main deſigns of procuring glory to God, and benefit to men.

Nor did he onely with content undergo the incommodities of a poor eſtate, but he was ſurrounded with continual dangers; the moſt powerful men of thoſe times (enraged with envy, ambition and avarice) deſperately maligning him; and being inceſſantly attentive upon all occaſi-

John 15. 18.

ons to moleſt, hurt and deſtroy him: *The world* (as he ſaith himſelf, that is, all the powerful and formidable part of the World) *hating me*; Yet did not this any-wiſe diſmay, or diſtemper him, nor cauſe him either to repine at his condition, or decline his duty. He utterly diſregarded all their ſpiteful machinations, perſiſting immoveable in the proſecution of his pious and charitable undertakings, to the admiration of thoſe who

John 7. 25.

obſerved his demeanour: *Is not this he* (ſaid they) *whom they ſeek to kill? but lo he ſpeaketh boldly.*

Luke 4. 30. Matt. 21. 27. 22. 18.

He did indeed ſometimes opportunely ſhun their fury, and prudently did elude their ſnares, but never went violently to repel them, or to execute any revenge for them; improving the wonderful power he was endued with, altogether to the advantage of mankind, never to the bane or hurt of his malitious enemies.

Senſible enough he was of the cauſeleſs hatred they bare him; (ἐμίσησάν με δωρεάν, *They*, ſaid he, *have hated me for nothing*;) and of their extream ingratitude; yet never could he be provoked to reſent, or requite their dealing; ſee how mildly he did expoſtulate the caſe with them; *Then*

John 15. 25.

John 10. 31.

(ſaith St. *John*) *the Jews took up ſtones to ſtone him: Jeſus anſwered them, Many*

Many good things have I ſhewed you from my Father, for which of thoſe do ye ſtone me?

To be extremely hated, and inhumanely perſecuted without any fault committed, or juſt occaſion offered, is greatly incenſive of humane paſſion; but for the pureſt, and ſtrongeſt good-will, for the moſt unexpreſſible beneficence, to be recompenced with moſt virulent reproaches, moſt odious ſlanders, moſt outrageous miſuſages, How exceeding was that meekneſs, which without any ſignification of regret, or diſguſt, could endure it?

Out of moſt tender charity, and ardent deſire of their ſalvation, he inſtructed them, and inſtilled heavenly doctrine into their minds, what thanks, what reward did he receive for that great favour? to be reputed, and reported an Impoſtour: πλανᾷ τὸν ὄχλον, *he* (ſaid they) *doth impoſe upon the people.* Matt. 23. 37. John 7. 12. Matt. 27. 63.

He took occaſion to impart the great bleſſing of pardon for Sin to ſome of them, confirming his authority of doing it by a miraculous work of goodneſs; How did they reſent ſuch an obligation? by accompting him a Blaſphemer: *Behold* (ſaith St. *Matthew*) *certain of the Scribes ſaid within themſelves, this man blaſphemeth*: Which moſt harſh and uncharitable cenſure of theirs he did not fiercely reprehend, but calmly diſcuſſed, and refuted by a clear reaſoning; τί ἐνθυμεῖσθε πονηρὸν; *Wherefore conceive ye evil in your hearts; for whether is eaſier to ſay, thy ſins are forgiven thee, or to ſay, ariſe and walk?* that is, Is it not credible that he, who can perform the one, may diſpenſe the other? Matt. 9. 3, &c. *Ingratos curavit, inſidiatoribus ceſſit.* Tert.

He freed them from moſt grievous diſeaſes, yea reſcued them from the greateſt miſchief poſſible in nature, being poſſeſſed by the unclean Fiend; How did they entertain this mighty benefit, by moſt horrible calumny accuſing him of Sorcery, or conſpiracy with the Devil himſelf? *The Phariſees ſaid, he caſteth out Devils by the Prince of the Devils*: yea thence attributing to him the very name and title of the grand Devil: *If they have called the Maſter of the houſe Beelzebub, how much more* (ſhall they defame) *them of his houſhold?* Yet this moſt injurious defamation he no otherwiſe rebuked, than by a mild diſcourſe, ſtrongly confuting it; *Every Kingdom* (ſaid he) *divided againſt it ſelf is brought to deſolation* —— *and if Satan caſt out Satan, he is divided againſt himſelf; how then ſhall his Kingdom ſtand?* that is, the Devil better underſtands his intereſt, than to aſſiſt any man in diſpoſſeſſing himſelf. Matt. 9. 34. 12. 24. Matt. 10. 25. Matt. 12. 25.

He did conſtantly labour in reclaiming them from errour and ſin, in converting them to God and goodneſs, in propoſing fair overtures of grace and mercy to them, in ſhewing them by word and practice the ſure way to happineſs; What iſſue was there of all his care and pains? What but neglect, diſtruſt, diſappointment, rejection of himſelf, of what he ſaid, and what he did? *Who hath believed our report, and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?* was a Propheſy, abundantly verified by their carriage toward him. John 12. 38.

Theſe, and the like uſages, which he perpetually did encounter, he conſtantly received without any paſſionate diſturbance of mind, any bitter reflections upon that Generation, any revengeful enterpriſes againſt them; yea requited them with continued earneſtneſs of hearty deſires, and laborious endeavours for their good.

We might obſerve the ingrateful diſreſpects of his own Countreymen, and Kindred toward him, which he paſſeth over without any grievous diſdain; rather excuſing it, by noting that entertainment to have been

Luke 4. 24. Matt. 13. 57. no peculiar accident to himself, but usual to all of like employment; *No Prophet* (said he) *is acceptable in his own countrey.*

Non illi jaltem civitati quæ tum recipere noluerat iratus est, cum etiam discipuli tam contumelioso oppido cælestes ignes repræsentari voluissent. Tert.

We might also mention his patient suffering repulses from strangers; as when being refused admittance into a *Samaritane* Village, and his Disciples being incensed with that rude discourtesie, would have fire called down from Heaven to consume those Churls, he restrained their unadvised wrath, and thus expressed his admirable meekness; *The Son of man is not come to destroy mens lives, but to save them.* Luke 9.53,56.

We might likewise remark his meek comporting with the stupid and * perverse incredulity of his Disciples, notwithstanding so many pregnant, and palpable inducements continually exhibited for confirmation of their faith; the which he no otherwise, than sometime gently, admonisheth them of, saying, τι δειλοι ἐστε ὀλιγόπιστοι; *Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?* ὀλιγόπιστε, τι ἐδίστασας; *O thou of small faith, why didst thou doubt?* * Luke 9. 41. Matt. 17. 17. *Non peccatores, non publicanos, aspernatus est.* Tert. Matt. 8. 26. 14. 31.

What should I insist on these, although very remarkable instances? since that one scene of his most grievous (shall I say, or glorious) passion doth represent unto us a perfect, and most lively image of the highest patience and meekness possible: of the greatest sorrow that ever was or could be, yet of a patience surmounting it; of the extreamest malice that ever was conceived, yet of a charity overswaying it; of injury most intolerable, yet of a meekness willingly and sweetly bearing it: There may we observe the greatest provocations from all hands to passionate animosity of spirit, and intemperate heat of speech, yet no discovery of the least disorderly, angry, or revengeful thought, the least rash, bitter, or reproachful word, but all undergone with cleerest serenity of mind, and sweetness of carriage toward all persons.

To *Judas*, who betrayed him, How doth he address himself? Doth he use such terms as the Man deserved, or as passion would have suggested, and reason would not have disallowed; Did he say, Thou most perfidious Villain, thou Monster of iniquity and ingratitude; thou desperately wicked Wretch; Dost thou, prompted by thy base covetousness, treacherously attempt to ruine thy gratious Master, and best Friend; thy most benign and bountiful Saviour? No, in stead of such proper language, he used the most courteous and endearing terms: Ἑταῖρε ἐφ' ᾧ πάρει; *Friend* (or companion) *for what dost thou come*; Or what is thy business here? a tacite charitable warning there is to reflect upon his unworthy and wicked action, but nothing apparent of wrath, or reproach. Matt. 26. 50.

From his own disciples and servants, who had beheld his many miraculous works, and were indebted to him for the greatest favours, he reasonably might have expected a most faithful adherence, and most diligent attendance on him in that juncture; yet he found them careless, and slothful: What then? How did he take it? Was he angry, did he upbraid, did he storm at them? Did he threaten to discard them? No; he onely first gently admonisheth them: *What, could ye not watch one hour with me*? then a little exciteth them, *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation*: He withal suggested an excuse for their drowsiness and dulness; *The Spirit is willing but the flesh is weak*; in fine, he indulgeth to their weakness, letting them alone, saying, καθεύδετε λοιπὸν, *Sleep on now and take your rest.* Matt. 26. 40, 45.

When he foresaw they would be offended at his (to appearance) disastrous estate, and fearfully would desert him, he yet expressed no indignation against them, or decrease of affection toward them upon that Matt. 26. 31.

score;

ſcore; but ſimply mentioneth it, as unconcerned in it, and not affected thereby.

And the unworthy Apoſtaſie of that Diſciple, whom he had eſpecially favoured and dignified, he onely did mildly forewarn him of, requiting it foreſeen by the promiſe of his own effectual prayers for his ſupport and recovery; and when St. *Peter* had committed that heinous fact, our good Lord onely *looked on him* with an eye of Charity and compaſſion; which more efficaciouſly ſtruck him, than the moſt dreadful threat; or ſharp reprehenſion could have done; *Peter* thereupon *went out, and wept bitterly.* Luke 22. 61, 62. Ἐπέβλεψε τῷ Πέτρῳ.

When the High-Prieſts officer, upon no reaſonable occaſion, did injuriouſly and ignominiouſly ſtrike him, he returned onely this mild expoſtulation: *if I have ſpoken evil, bear witneſs of the evil; if well, why ſmiteſt thou me?* That is, I adviſe thee to proceed in a fair and legal way againſt me, not to deal thus boiſterouſly and wrongfully, to thy own harm. John 18. 23. Cypr. Ep. 65.

Even careful and tender he was of thoſe, who were the inſtruments of his ſuffering; he protected them from harm, who conducted him to execution; as we ſee in the caſe of the High-Prieſts ſervant, whom (with more zeal, than wherewith he ever regarded his own ſafety) he defended from the fury of his own friend, and cured of the wounds received in the way of perſecuting himſelf. Luke 22. 51, &c.

All his demeanour under that great Trial was perfectly calm, not the leaſt regret, or reluctancy of mind, the leaſt contradiction, or obloquy of ſpeech appearing therein; ſuch it was as became *the lamb of God,* who was to *take away the ſins of the world,* by a willing oblation of himſelf; ſuch as did exactly correſpond to the ancient Prophecies; *He was oppreſſed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he was brought as a Lamb to the ſlaughter, and as a ſheep before the ſhearer is dumb, ſo he opened not his mouth*; and, *I gave my back to the ſmiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from ſhame and ſpitting.* Iſa. 53. 7. Iſa. 50. 6.

Neither did the wrongful ſlanders deviſed and alledged againſt him by ſuborned witneſſes, nor the virulent invectives of the Prieſts, nor the barbarous clamours of the people, nor the contemptuous ſpitting upon him, and buffeting him, nor the cruel ſcourgings, nor the contumelious mockeries, nor all the bloudy tortures inflicted upon him, wring from him one ſyllable importing any diſſatisfaction in his caſe, any wrath conceived for his miſuſages, any grudge or ill-will in his mind toward his perſecutors; but on the contrary, inſtead of hatred and revenge he declared the greateſt kindneſs and charity toward them, praying heartily to God his Father for the pardon of their ſins. Inſtead of aggravating their crime and injury againſt him, he did in a ſort extenuate and excuſe it, by conſideration of their ignorance and miſtake: *Lord,* (ſaid he, in the height of his ſufferings) *forgive them, for they know not what they do.* The life they ſo violently bereaved him of, he did willingly mean to lay down for the ranſom of their lives; the bloud they ſpilt he wiſhed to be a ſalutary Balſam for their wounds and maladies; he moſt chearfully did offer himſelf by their hands a ſacrifice for their offences. No ſmall part of his afflictions was a ſenſe of their ſo grievouſly diſpleaſing God, and pulling miſchief on their own heads, a foreſight of his kind intentions being fruſtrated by their obſtinate incredulity and impenitence, a reflection upon that inevitable vengeance, which from the divine Juſtice would attend them; this foreſeen did work in him a diſtaſtful ſenſe, (more grievous than what his Luke 23. 34.

own

own pain could produce) and drew from him tears of Compaſſion (ſuch
Luke 19. 41. 13. 34. as no reſentment of his own caſe could extort) for, *When he was come near he beheld the City; and wept over it, ſaying; O that thou hadſt known, even thou, at leaſt in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace.*

If ever he did expreſs any commotion of mind in reference to this matter, it was onely then when one of his friends, out of a blind fondneſs of affection did preſume to diſſwade him from undergoing theſe evils; then indeed being ſomewhat moved with indignation he ſaid to St. *Peter, Get*
Mat. 16. 23. *thee behind me, Satan, for thou art an offence unto me; for thou ſavoureſt not the things that be of God, but thoſe that be of men.*

Neither was it out of a ſtupid inſenſibility or ſtubborn reſolution that
Mat. 26. 37, 38. Luke 22. 44. John 12. 27. Mar. 26. 39. Heb. 5. 7. he did thus behave himſelf; for he had a moſt vigorous ſenſe of all thoſe grievances, and a ſtrong (natural) averſation from undergoing them; as thoſe dolorous Agonies wherewith he ſtruggled; thoſe deadly groans he uttered; thoſe monſtrous lumps of Bloud he ſwet out; thoſe earneſt Prayers he made to be freed from them, declare; but from a perfect ſubmiſſion to the Divine Will, and entire command over his Paſſions, an exceſſive Charity toward Mankind this patient and meek behaviour did
John 18. 11. Mat. 26. 39. Luke 22. 42. John 10. 18. 6. 51. ſpring: *The Cup which my Father hath given me, ſhall I not drink it? O my Father, if it be poſſible, let this Cup paſs from me; nevertheleſs not as I will, but as thou wilt; Let not my will, but thine be done. No man taketh away my life, but I lay it down of my own accord; I will give my fleſh for the life of the world*: So doth our Lord himſelf expreſs the true grounds of his paſſion and his patience.

Such is the Example of our Lord; the ſerious conſideration whereof how can it otherwiſe than work patience and meekneſs in us; If He, that was *the Lord of Glory* (infinitely excellent in Dignity and Vertue) did ſo readily embrace, did ſo contentedly endure ſuch extremities of penury, hardſhip, diſgrace and pain, how can we refuſe them or repine at them? Can we pretend to a better lot than he received, or preſume that God muſt deal better with us than he did with his own deareſt Son? Can we be diſpleaſed at a conformity to our Lord and Maſter? Can we without ſhame affect to live more ſplendidly, or to fare more deliciouſly than he choſe to do? Shall we fret or wail, becauſe our deſires are croſſed, our projects defeated, our intereſts any-wiſe prejudiced; whenas his moſt earneſt deſires, and his moſt painful endeavours had ſo little of due and deſired ſucceſs: When He was ever ready, and had ſo conſtant occaſion to ſay, *Let not my will be done*? Can we deſpiſe that ſtate of meanneſs and ſorrow which He from the higheſt ſublimities of Glory and Beatitude was pleaſed to ſtoop unto? Can we take our ſelves for the want of any
Luke 14. 27. 9. 23. Mar. 10. 38. 16. 24. Heb. 5. 8. preſent conveniences or comforts to be wretched, whenas the fountain of all happineſs was deſtitute of all ſuch things, and ſcarce did ever taſte any worldly pleaſure? Are we fit or *worthy to be his Diſciples*, if we will not *take up his Croſs and follow him*; if we will not go to his School (that School wherein he is ſaid himſelf to have *learnt obedience*) if we will not con that leſſon which he ſo loudly hath read out, and tranſcribe that Copy which he ſo fairly hath ſet before us; Can we pretend to thoſe great benefits, thoſe high priviledges, thoſe rich and excellent rewards, which he hath
Heb. 2. 9, 10. Phil. 2. 9. attained for us, and which he propoſeth to us, if we will not go on toward them in that way of patience which he hath trod before us?

Heb. 12. 3. Can we alſo, if we *conſider him that endured ſuch contradiction of ſinners*, be tranſported with any wrathful or revengeful paſſion, upon any pro-

provocation from our brethren? Can we hope, or wiſh for better uſage from men than our Lord did ever find? Can we be much diſpleaſed with any man for thwarting our deſires or intereſts, for diſſenting from our conceits, for croſſing our humours, whenas he (to whom all reſpect and obſervance was due) did meet with ſo little regard or compliance in any way; continually did encounter repulſes, diſappointments, oppoſitions from the perverſe and ſpiteful world? Can we be very jealous of our Credit, or furious when our imaginary honour (honour, that we never really deſerved, or can juſtly claim, being guilty of ſo many great faults and ſins) is touched with the leaſt diſgraceful reflection, if we do well obſerve and mind, that the moſt truly, and indeed onely honourable perſonage (onely honourable, becauſe onely innocent perſon) that ever was had his reputation aſperſed by the moſt odious reproaches, which deepeſt Envy and Malice could deviſe, without any grievous reſentment, or being ſolicitous otherwiſe to aſſert or clear it than by a conſtant ſilence? Can we be exaſperated by every petty affront, (real or ſuppoſed) when the moſt noble, moſt courteous, moſt obliging perſon that ever breathed upon earth was treacherouſly expoſed to violence by his own ſervant, ſhamefully deſerted by his own moſt beloved friends, deſpitefully treated by thoſe whom he never had offended, by thoſe upon whom he had heaped the greateſt benefits, without expreſſing any anger or diſpleaſure againſt them, but yielding many ſignal teſtimonies of tendereſt pity and love toward them? Can we ſee our Lord treated like a ſlave and a thief, without any diſturbance or commotion of heart; and we vile wretches upon every ſlight occaſion ſwell with fierce diſdain, pour forth reproachful language, execute horrible miſchief upon our brethren? He indeed was ſurrounded with injuries and affronts; every ſin that ſince the foundation of things hath been committed was an offence againſt him, and a burthen upon him; (*God laid upon him the iniquities of us all*) ſo many declared enemies, ſo many Rebels, ſo many perſecutors, ſo many Murtherers he had as there have lived men in the World; for every ſinner did in truth conſpire to his affliction and deſtruction; we all in effect did betray him, did accuſe him, did mock, did ſcourge, did pierce and crucifie him; yet he forgave all offences, he died for all perſons; *while we were yet enemies, yet ſinners, he died for us*, to reſcue us from death and miſery: And ſhall we not then in imitation of him, for his dear ſake, in gratitude, reſpect and obedience to him, be ready to bear the infirmities of our brethren, to forgive any ſmall wrongs or offences from them; whatever they do to us, to love them, and do them what good we can? If ſo admirable a pattern of patience and meekneſs ſo immenſe cannot, what is there that can oblige or move us? I conclude with thoſe doxologies to our ſo patient and meek Redeemer:

Quam gravis cauſa ſit hominis Chriſtiani ſervum pati nolle cum prior paſſus ſit Dominus, &c. Cypr. *Ep.* 56.

Iſa. 53. 6.

Rom. 5. 6, 8, 10.

Rependamus illi patientiam, quam pro nobis ipſe dependit. Ter. *de Pat.* 16.

Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain, to receive power, and riches, and wiſdom, and ſtrength, and honour, and glory, and bleſſing. Bleſſing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him that ſitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb for ever and ever. Apoc. 5. 12, 13.

Unto him that loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins in his bloud, and hath made us Kings and Prieſts unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Apoc. 1. 5.

SER-

SERMON XI.

Rejoyce evermore.

1 THESS. V. 16.

Rejoyce evermore.

Rejoyce evermore! O good Apoſtle, how acceptable Rules doſt thou preſcribe? O bleſſed God, how gracious Laws doſt thou impoſe? This is a Rule to which one would think all men ſhould be forward to conform; This is a Law, which it may ſeem ſtrange that any man ſhould find in his heart to diſobey: for what can any Soul deſire more than to be always on the merry pin, or to lead a life in continual Alacrity? who readily would not embrace a Duty, the obſervance whereof is not onely pleaſant, but pleaſure it ſelf? Who is ſo wild as to affect a ſin, which hath nothing in it but diſeaſe and diſguſt?

That joy ſhould be injoyned, that ſadneſs ſhould be prohibited, may it not be a plauſible exception againſt ſuch a Precept, that it is ſuperfluous and needleſs, ſeeing all the endeavours of men do aim at nothing elſe, but to procure joy and eſchew ſorrow; ſeeing all men do conſpire in opinion with *Solomon*, that *a man hath nothing better under the ſun than —— to be merry*? Were it not rather expedient to recommend ſober ſadneſs, or to repreſs the inclinations of men to effuſe mirth and jollity?

Eccl. 8. 15. 2. 24. 3. 12, 22. 5. 18, 26.

So it may ſeem; but yet alas, if we conſult experience, or obſerve the World, we ſhall find this Precept very ill obeyed; for do we not commonly ſee People in heavy dumps; do we not often hear doleful complaints? is not this World apparently a ſtage of continual trouble, and grief? Did not the Preacher, upon a diligent ſurvey of *all the works done under the Sun*, truly proclaim, *Behold all is vanity and vexation of Spirit*? Where, I pray, is any full or firm content; where is ſolid and durable joy to be found?

Eccl. 1. 14.

It is true that men, after a confuſed manner, are very eager in the queſt, and earneſt in the purſuit of joy; they rove through all the Foreſt of Creatures, and beat every buſh of Nature for it, hoping to catch it either in natural Endowments and improvements of Soul, or in the gifts of Fortune, or in the acquiſts of Induſtry; in Temporal Poſſeſſions, in ſenſual Enjoyments, in ludicrous Divertiſements and amuſements of Fancy; in gratification of their Appetites and Paſſions; They all hunt for it, though following a different Scent, and running in various Tracks, ſome in way of plodding for rare notions, ſome in compaſſing ambitious projects, ſome in amaſſing heaps of wealth, ſome in practice of over-reaching ſubtilties,

tilties, ſome in wreeking their malice, their revenge, their envy; ſome in venting frothy conceits, bitter ſcoffs, or profane railleries; ſome in jovial converſation and quaffing the full bowls; ſome in muſick and dancing; ſome in gallantry and courting; ſome in all kinds of riotous exceſs, and wanton diſſoluteneſs; ſo each in his way doth inceſſantly prog for joy; But all much in vain, or without any conſiderable ſucceſs; finding at moſt inſtead of it ſome faint ſhadows, or tranſitory flaſhes of pleaſure; the which depending on cauſes very contingent and mutable, reſiding in a frail temper of fluid humours of body, conſiſting in ſlight touches upon the organs of ſenſe, in frisks of the corporeal ſpirits, or in fumes and vapours twitching the imagination, do ſoon flag and expire; their ſhort enjoyment being alſo tempered with regret, being eaſily daſhed by any croſs accident, ſoon declining into a nauſeous ſatiety, and in the end degenerating into gall and bitter remorſe; for *Even* as (*Solomon* obſerved) *in laughter, the heart is ſorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heavineſs*; and *Though* (as it is ſaid in *Job*) *wickedneſs is ſweet in the mouth —— yet his meat in his bowels is turned, it is the gall of Aſps within him*; So that indeed the uſual delights, which men affect are ſuch, that we ſhould not if we could, and we could not if we would conſtantly entertain them; ſuch *rejoicing evermore* being equally unreaſonable and impoſſible.

Prov. 14. 13.
Sunt quædam triſtes voluptates—Sen. *Ep.* 67.
Job 20. 12.,—14. 20. 5.

Quaquaverſum ſe vertit anima hominis, ad dolores figitur alibi, præterquam in te. Aug. *Conf.* 4. 10.

Wherefore there is ground more than enough, that we ſhould be put to ſeek for a true, ſubſtantial, and conſiſtent joy; it being withal implied, that we ſhould affect it in another way, or look for it in another box, than commonly men do; who therefore are ſo generally diſappointed, becauſe they would have it upon impoſſible or undue terms; and leaſt expect it there, where it is onely to be had.

It is a ſcandalous miſpriſion, vulgarly admitted, concerning Religion, that it is altogether ſullen and ſour, requiring a dull, lumpiſh, moroſe kind of life, barring all delight, all mirth, all good humour: Whereas on the contrary it alone is the never-failing ſource of true, pure, ſteady joy; ſuch as is deeply rooted in the heart, immoveably founded in the reaſon of things, permanent like the immortal ſpirit wherein it dwelleth, and like the eternal objects, whereon it is fixed; which is not apt to fade, or cloy; and is not ſubject to any impreſſions apt to corrupt, or impair it: Whereas in our Text, and in many Texts parallel to it, we ſee, that our Religion doth not onely allow us, but even doth oblige us to be joyful as much and often as can be, not permitting us to be ſad for one Minute, baniſhing the leaſt fit of Melancholly, charging us in all times, upon all occaſions to be chearful; ſuppoſing conſequently that it is in ſome manner poſſible to be ſo, and affording power to effect what it doth require.

Such indeed is the tranſcendent goodneſs of our God, that he maketh our delight to be our duty, and our ſorrow to be our ſin, adapting his holy Will to our principal inſtinct; that he would have us to reſemble himſelf as in all other perfections, ſo in a conſtant ſtate of happineſs; that as he hath provided a glorious Heaven of bliſs for us hereafter, ſo he would have us enjoy a comfortable paradiſe of delight here. He accordingly hath ordered the whole frame of our Religion in a tendency to produce joy in thoſe who embrace it; for what is the Goſpel, but (as the holy Angel, the firſt promulger of it, did report) *good tydings of great joy to all people?* How doth God repreſent himſelf therein, but as *the*

Luke 2. 10. Rom. 5. 33. 13. 5.

Eph. 2 4. 2 Cor. 1. 3. 13. 11. 1 Pet. 5. 10. Jam. 5. 11. Matt. 11. 28. Apoc. 7. 17. 21. 4. Tit. 2. Matt. 25. 21. John 15. 11. 16. 22, 24.

God of love, of hope, of peace, of all conſolation, chearfully ſmiling in favour on us, gratiouſly inviting us to the moſt pleaſant enjoyments, bountifully diſpenſing moſt comfortable bleſſings of mercy, of grace, of ſalvation to us? for what doth our Lord call us to him, but *that he may give us reſt, and refreſhment to our ſouls*; that he may *wipe away all tears from our eyes*; that he may ſave us from moſt woful deſpair, and ſettle us *in a bleſſed hope*; that we may *enter into our Maſter's joy*; that *our joy may be full*, and ſuch *as no man can take from us*?

John 14. 16.

What is the great overture of the Goſpel, but the gift of a moſt bleſſed *Comforter, to abide with us for ever*, chearing our hearts with his lightſome preſence, and raviſhing conſolations? Wherein doth the Kingdom of Heaven conſiſt? *not in meat and drink, but in righteouſneſs, and peace, and joy in the holy Ghoſt*? What are the prime fruits ſprouting from that root of Chriſtian life, the Divine Spirit? they are, as St. *Paul* telleth us, *Love, joy and peace*: Are there not numberleſs declarations importing a joyful ſatisfaction granted to the obſervers of God's Commandments; that *Light is ſown for the righteous, and gladneſs for the upright in heart*? Doth not our Lord pronounce a ſpecial beatitude to the Practiſer of every vertue? And if we ſcan all the Doctrines, all the Inſtitutions, all the Precepts, all the Promiſes of Chriſtianity, will not each appear pregnant with matter of joy, will not each yeild great reaſon, and ſtrong obligation to this duty of *rejoicing evermore*?

Rom. 14. 17. Gal. 5. 22. Pſal. 97. 11. 118. 15. 32. 11. 68. 3.

Wherefore a Chriſtian, as ſuch, (according to the deſign of his Religion, and in proportion to his compliance with its dictates) is the moſt jocund, blith, and gay Perſon in the World; always in humour and full of chear; continually bearing a mind well ſatisfied, a light heart and calm ſpirit, a ſmooth brow and ſerene countenance, a grateful accent of ſpeech, and a ſweetly compoſed tenour of carriage; No black thought, no irkſome deſire, no troubleſome paſſion ſhould lodge in his breaſt; any ſurrow, any frown, any cloud doth ſit ill upon his face; the leaſt fretful word, or froward behaviour doth utterly misbecome him; If at any time it appear otherwiſe, 'tis a deflection from his character; 'tis a blemiſh and wrong to his profeſſion; it argueth a prevarication in his judgment, or in his practice; He forgetteth that he is a Chriſtian, or hath not preſerved the innocence belonging to that name. For, If a Chriſtian remembreth what he is, or is ſenſible of his condition; if he reflecteth on the Dignity of his Perſon, the Nobleneſs of his Relations, the ſublimity of his Priviledges, the greatneſs and certainty of his Hopes, how can he be out of humour? Is it not abſurd for him that is at peace with Heaven, with his own Conſcience, with all the World; for the Poſſeſſor of the beſt goods, and the Heir of a bleſſed immortality; for the Friend, the Favourite, the Son of God, to fret or wail?

He that is ſettled in a moſt proſperous ſtate, that is (if he pleaſeth) ſecure of its continuance, that is well aſſured of its improvement; that hath whatever good he can wiſh in his reach, and more than he can conceive in ſure reverſion, what account can be given that he ſhould be ſad, or ſeem afflicted?

He that hath the unexhauſtible ſpring of good for his portion, that hath his welfare entruſted in God's moſt faithful hand; that hath God's infallible word for his ſupport; that hath free acceſs to him, *in whoſe preſence is fulneſs of joy*; that hath frequent taſts of God's goodneſs, in gracious diſpenſations of Providence, in entercourſes of devotion, in the influences of grace; that hath the infinite beauty and excellency for the perpetual object of his contemplation and affection; that enjoyeth the ſerenity of a ſound

Pſal. 16. 11.

a ſound mind, of a pure heart, of a quiet conſcience, of a ſure hope, what can he want to refreſh or comfort him?

If a true and perfect Chriſtian hath no care to diſtract him, having diſcharged all his concerns on God's Providence; If he hath no fear to diſmay him, being guarded by the Almighty protection from all danger and miſchief; If he hath no deſpair to ſink him, having a ſure refuge in the divine mercy and help; If he hath no ſuperſtitious terrours or ſcruples to perplex him, being conſcious of his own upright intentions to pleaſe God, and confident of God's merciful willingneſs to accept his ſincere endeavours; If he hath no incurable remorſe to torment him, the ſtings of guilt being pulled out by the merits of his Saviour, applied by his faith and repentance: If he hath no longing deſires to diſquiet him, being fully ſatisfied with that he doth poſſeſs, or may expect from God's bounty; all other things being far beneath his ambition, or coveting: If he hath no contentions to enflame him, knowing nought here worth paſſionately ſtriving for, and being reſolved to hold a friendly good-will toward all men; If he hath no repining envy, ſeeing that none can be more happy than he may be, and that every man's good by charity is made his own; If he hath no fretful diſcontent, ſince he gladly doth acquieſce in the condition, and ſucceſs allotted to him, reſigning his will to God's pleaſure, taking all for beſt which thence doth occur, being aſſured that *all things ſhall work together for his good* and advantage: If he hath no ſpiteful rancours to corrode his heart, no boiſterous paſſions to ruffle his mind, no inordinate appetites, perverſe humours, or corrupt deſigns to diſtemper his ſoul, and diſturb his life, whence then may ſorrow come, or how can ſadneſs creep into him?

Ἐπθυμίας ἀπαλλαθείσης εὐθὺς ἡ ψυχὴ χ̀ χαλιωθῶσα γίνεται. Juſt. Mart. ad Græc. Paræn. 2.

What is there belonging to a Chriſtian, whence grief naturally can ſpring? from God, *our exceeding joy*, the Fountain of Happineſs; from Heaven the region of light and bliſs; from divine truth, which illuſtrateth and cheareth the ſoul; from God's Law, which *rejoiceth the heart*, and *is ſweeter than honey and the honey comb*; from wiſdom, whoſe *wayes are ways of pleaſantneſs, and all whoſe paths are peace*; from vertue, which cureth our afflictive diſtempers, and compoſeth our vexatious paſſions; from theſe things, I ſay, above which a Chriſtian as ſuch is onely converſant, no ſorrow can be derived; from thoſe ſweet ſources no bitter ſtreams can flow; But hell, the fleſh, the world, darkneſs, errour, folly, ſin and irreligion (things with which a Chriſtian ſhould have nothing to do, from which he ſhould keep a-loof, which he doth pretend utterly to renounce and abandon) theſe, theſe alone, are the parents of diſcomfort and anguiſh.

Pſal. 43. 4. Pſal. 19. 10. 119. 103. Prov. 3. 17.

Wherefore there is the ſame reaſon, the ſame obligation, the ſame poſſibility, that we ſhould rejoice evermore, as that we ſhould always be Chriſtians, exactly performing duty, and totally forbearing ſin; for innocence and indolency do ever go together, both together, making Paradiſe; perfect vertue and conſtant alacrity are inſeparable companions, both conſtituting beatitude; And as although from our infirmity we cannot attain the higheſt pitch of vertue, yet we muſt aſpire thereto endeavouring *to perfect holineſs in the fear of God*; ſo though it may not be poſſible to get, yet it is reaſonable to ſeek perpetual joy; which doing in the right way we ſhall not fail of procuring a good meaſure of it.

2 Cor. 7. 1. Matt. 5. 48. 1 John 3. 3.

Indeed to exerciſe piety and to rejoice are the ſame things, or things

ſo interwoven, that nothing can disjoin them; religious practice is like
Pſal. 46. 4. that *river, the ſtreams whereof make glad the City of God, the holy place of the Tabernacle of the moſt High*, that is, every pious ſoul; No good deed can be performed without ſatisfaction; each vertue hath a peculiar delight annexed to it; whence the acts of joy, which upon various objects, grounds, and occaſions we may exert, being numberleſs, I ſhall onely touch a few principal inſtances.

I. We ſhould evermore rejoice in the exerciſe of our faith; according
Rom. 15. 13. to that prayer of our Apoſtle for the *Romans, Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing.*

Every kind of faith (that which embraceth divine truths, that which applieth God's mercy, that which enſureth God's promiſes, that which confideth in God's providence, each of them) is a clear ſpring of joy, ever ſtanding open to us; which he that drinketh, *ſhall never thirſt.*
Joh. 6. 35. 7. 38. 4. 14.

1. The faith, which embraceth God's heavenly truth, doth not onely enlighten our minds, but is apt to affect our hearts; there being no Article of Faith, or myſtery of our religion, which doth not involve ſome great advantage, ſome notable favour, ſome happy occurrence diſpenſed to us by the goodneſs of God, the which Faith doth apprehend and convey to
Matt. 13. 20. Phil. 1. 25. our ſpiritual guſt, ſo that we cannot hardly *but receive the word with joy.* For is it not very ſweet with Faith to contemplate the rich bounty of God in the Creation of the World, and producing ſo goodly a Frame, ſo copious a Store of things, with a ſpecial regard to our ſuſtenance and accommodation? is it not ſatisfactory to believe that God by his Almighty hand and vigilant care, with the ſame benign regard doth uphold and govern the ſame? Is it not extreamly pleaſant with faith to reflect on that great honour and happineſs, which God did vouchſafe, to confer on mankind, by ſending down from Heaven his onely Son to aſſume our nature,
2 Pet. 1. 4. 1 John 1. 3. and to converſe with men, that we might be advanced to a *participation of the divine nature*, and to an enjoyment of *communion with God*? How without great delight can we be perſwaded, that our Saviour by his meritorious obedience and paſſion hath appeaſed God's wrath, and inclined his favour toward us, hath ſatisfied juſtice, hath expiated our offences, hath ranſomed and reſcued our ſouls from the dominion of ſin and Satan, from death and corruption, from Hell and everlaſting torment; hath purchaſed immortal life, and endleſs bliſs for us? What comfort is there in
ἀφθαρσία — 2 Cor. 4. 14. being aſſured by the reſurrection, and triumph of our Lord over death, that our ſouls are indeed immortal, that our bodies ſhall be raiſed from the duſt, that our perſons are capable of an eternal ſubſiſtence in happineſs? will it not much pleaſe us with an eye of faith to behold our Redeemer ſitting in glorious exaltation at God's right hand, governing the World for the benefit of his Church, diſpenſing benediction and grace to
Heb. 2. 17. 1 John 2. 1. us; interceding as our *merciful and faithful High-prieſt* for the pardon of our ſins, the acceptance of our prayers, the ſupply of our needs, and the relief of our diſtreſſes; If we be fully convinced, that our Lord Jeſus is
Heb. 5. 9. the Chriſt, our Lord, and Saviour, *the Authour of eternal Salvation, to all that obey him*, how can we otherwiſe than follow thoſe, of whom St.
1 Pet. 1. 8. *Peter* ſaith, *Whom having not ſeen ye love; in whom, though ye now ſee him not, yet believing ye rejoice with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory*; So from the hearty belief of every evangelical Truth we may ſuck conſolation; each of them is food of our Soul; and to believe it is to eat it; which
Crede & manducaſti. Aug. how can we do without a delicious, or moſt ſavoury reliſh?

2. At

2. At leaſt methinks that faith greatly ſhould exhilarate us, which applieth thoſe verities (ſo *worthy of all acceptation*) wherein God doth open his arms wide to embrace us, propoſing moſt kind invitations, and favourable overtures of mercy, upon the faireſt terms poſſible; together with effectual remedies for all the maladies and miſeries of our ſouls: for if we are ſenſible of our heinous Guilts, if we are laden with the heavy burthen of our ſins, if our heart is galled with ſore compunction for our miſdeeds; if we are ſtruck with the *terrours of the Lord*, and *tremble with the fear of Gods judgments*; how comfortable muſt it be to be perſwaded that God is fully reconcileable to us, is very deſirous to ſhew us mercy, and gladly will accept our repentance; that *we have an advocate with the Father*, who *hath propitiated for our ſins*, doth mediate for our peace, hath both full power and certain will, if we ſincerely do renounce our offences, wholly to remit them? ſo that *there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Chriſt Jeſus, who walk not after the fleſh, but after the ſpirit*; and that *being juſtified by faith we have peace with God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; Will not this belief revive us, and *make the broken bones to rejoyce*; will not the Goſpel of peace be hence in truth *a joyful ſound* to us? might it not hence well be proclaimed in the Prophet, *Comfort ye, Comfort ye my people; ſpeak ye comfortably to Jeruſalem, and cry unto her; that her warfare is accompliſhed, that her iniquity is pardoned.*

1 Tim. 1. 15.
Pſ. 38. 1. 6. 1. 102. 4. 143. 4. 119. 120.
1 John 2. 1, 2.
Rom. 8. 1.
Rom. 5. 1.
Pſal. 51. 8. 90. 8, 14.
Iſa. 40. 1, 2.

And if we find our ſelves in habit of ſoul grievouſly diſtempered, labouring under great impotency and blindneſs, overborn and oppreſſed with the prevalency of corruption, peſtered with unreaſonable deſires and paſſions, unable to curb our inclinations and appetites, to reſiſt temptations, to diſcharge our duty in any tolerable meaſure, or with any eaſe; is it not then comfortable to believe, that we have a moſt faithful and skilful Phiſician at hand to cure our diſtempers; that we have a powerful ſuccour within ken, to relieve our infirmities; that God is ready to impart an abundant ſupply of grace, of light, of ſpiritual ſtrength to direct and aſſiſt us; that if any man doth lack *wiſdom*, he is encouraged *with faith to ask it of God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not*? if any man want ſtrength, God's Almighty Spirit is promiſed to thoſe, who with humble earneſtneſs do implore it; ſo that we may *be able to do all things* (incumbent on us) *by Chriſt who ſtrengtheneth us.*

Jam. 1. 5, 6.
Luke 11. 13.
Phil. 4. 13.
Rom. 7. 25.
2 Cor. 3. 5.
Ph. 2. 13.

3. And what more hearty ſatisfaction can we feel, than in a firm perſwaſion concerning the real accompliſhment of thoſe *exceedingly great and pretious promiſes*, whereby we become capable of the moſt excellent priviledges, the moſt ample benefits, the moſt happy rewards, that can be? how can the belief that by God's infallible word, or as ſurely as truth it ſelf is true, an eternal inheritance of a treaſure that cannot fail, of a glory that cannot fade, of a kingdom that cannot be ſhaken, of a felicity ſurpaſſing all expreſſion and all conceit, is reſerved for us, in recompence of our faithful obedience; how, I ſay, can that be a dead, dull, dry belief, void of ſprightly comfort and pleaſure?

2 Pet. 1. 4.

Likewiſe the faith of confidence in God's good providence, and paternal care over us, (whatever our condition or circumſtances be) ſhould infuſe a chearful refreſhment of heart into us.

It is in holy Scripture moſt frequently aſſerted, that he who placeth his truſt in God, is a very bleſſed and happy Perſon; and can we without great ſatisfaction partake of that beatitude?

Can we by ſuch a truſt disburthen all our ſolicitous cares, all our anxious fears, all the troubles of our ſpirit and preſſures of our condition upon

upon God, with ſtrong aſſurance, that from his mighty power and watchful care, in due time, in the moſt expedient manner, we ſhall receive a competent ſupply of our wants, a riddance from our grievances, a protection from all danger and harm, a bleſſing upon all our good endeavours and undertakings, without feeling much eaſe and peace in our hearts?

What can be more chearing than a perſwaſion, that all our concerns are lodged in the hands of ſuch a Friend, ſo wiſe, ſo able, ſo faithful, ſo affectionate, ſo ever readily diſpoſed to help us, and further our good? They who truſt in God, are ſaid *to abide under the ſhadow of the Almighty*, and *to be covered with his wings*; God is often ſtyled their rock, their fortreſs, their ſhield and buckler, their defence and refuge; And are they not then impregnably ſafe? why then ſhould they fear any diſaſter? at what occurrence ſhould they be diſturbed? Have they not huge reaſon to ſay with the *Pſalmiſt*, *In the ſhadow of thy wings will I rejoice*; *The Lord is my ſtrength and my ſheild, my heart truſteth in him, and I am helped*; *therefore my heart danceth for joy, and in my Song will I praiſe him*: May not each of thoſe confiders in God well repreſs all inſurrections of trouble and grief, with that holy charm, *Why art thou ſo vexed, O my ſoul, and why art thou ſo diſquieted within me, O truſt in God —— for he is the health of my countenance, and my God.*

Pſal. 91. 1. Pſal. 61. 4. 91. 4. 57. 1. 17. 8. 36. 7. 18. 2. 62. 2. Pſal. 112. 2. Pſal. 63. 7. Pſal. 28. 7. (Pſal. 33. 21.) Pſal. 42. 14. 43. 5.

II. We ſhould evermore rejoice in the practice of Chriſtian hope, making good that aphoriſm of *Solomon*, *The hope of the righteous ſhall be gladneſs*; and obeying thoſe Apoſtolical injunctions, that we ſhould *rejoice in hope*; that we ſhould *retain the confidence, and the rejoicing of hope firm to the end.* Thoſe excellent and moſt beneficial truths, thoſe ſweet propoſals of grace and mercy, thoſe rich promiſes, which faith doth apprehend as true in a general reference to all Chriſtians, hope doth appropriate, and apply as particularly touching our ſelves; improving the knowledge of our common capacity into a ſenſe of our ſpecial intereſt in them. God, ſaith our Faith, will aſſuredly receive all penitent Sinners to mercy, will crown all pious Chriſtians with glory, will faithfully perform whatever he hath gratiouſly promiſed to all People, hath a tender care for all that love and fear him; But God, ſaith our hope, will have mercy on me, will *render to me the wages of righteouſneſs*, will *verify his good word to me his ſervant*, will protect, will deliver, will bleſs me in all exigencies: If ſo, being conſcious of our ſincere endeavour to ſerve and pleaſe God; if diſcerning, from a careful reflection upon our heart and ways, that in ſome good meaſure with fidelity and diligence we have diſcharged the conditions required of us, we can entitle our ſelves to God's ſpecial affection, we can accommodate his word to our caſe, we can aſſume a propriety in his regard, how can we forbear conceiving joy?

Prov. 10. 28. Rom. 12. 12. Heb. 3. 6. 2 Tim 4. 8. 1 Kings 8. 26.

All hope, in proportion to the worth of its object, and the ſolidity of its ground, is comfortable; it being *the anchor of the ſoul*, which ſtayeth and ſupporteth it in undiſturbed reſt; it appeaſing unquiet deſires, it ſetting abſent goods before us, and anticipating future enjoyments by a ſweet foretaſt; Seeing then if we have a good Conſcience, and *our heart doth not condemn us*, our hope is grounded *on the rock of ages* (on the immutable nature, and the infallible word of God) ſeeing it is the hope of the moſt worthy, the moſt ſublime, the moſt incomparable and ineſtimable goods, it muſt be moſt extremely delightful.

Heb. 6. 19.

Καὶ ὡς ὃ παρεγλῶσαι ἐστόχασεν παλιγγενεσίας αὐτὴ ἡ ψυχὴ τῇ ἐλπίδι χαυρεμδὸν ἀφαίνεται. Conſt. Ap. 7. 33.

1 John 3. 31.

Iſa. 26. 4.

If

If it much pleaſeth men to conceit themſelves next heirs of a fair eſtate, to have the reverſion of a good office, to be probable expectants of a great preferment (although death may intercept, or other accidents may obſtruct the accompliſhment of ſuch hopes) how much more ſhall that *lively hope* (of which St. *Peter* ſpeaketh) *of an inheritance, incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reſerved in Heaven for us; who are kept by the power of God through faith unto ſalvation,* (which hope therefore can never be daſhed or defeated) breed a moſt chearful ſatisfaction, far tranſcending all other pleaſures, which ſpring from the moſt deſirable fruitions here; according to that admonition of our Lord, *Notwithſtanding in this rejoice not that the ſpirits are ſubject unto you; but rather rejoice that your names are written in Heaven.* 1 Pet. 1. 4, 5. Luke 10. 20.

III. We ſhould evermore rejoice in the performing the duty of charity; both that which we owe to God, and that which is due to our Neighbour.

Love is the ſweeteſt and moſt delectable of all Paſſions; and when by the conduct of wiſdom it is directed in a rational way toward a worthy, congruous, attainable object, it cannot otherwiſe than fill the heart with raviſhing delight.

And ſuch (in all reſpects ſuperlatively ſuch) an object is God: He infinitely beyond all other things deſerveth our affection, as moſt perfectly amiable and deſireable, as having obliged us by innumerable and ineſtimable benefits, all the good that we have ever enjoyed, or that we can ever expect, being derived from his pure bounty; all things in the world in competition with him, being pitifully mean, ugly and loathſome; all things without him, being vain, unprofitable, and hurtful to us; ſo that the *Pſalmiſt* might well ſay, *Who in Heaven can be compared unto the Lord? who among the ſons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord? whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I can deſire beſide thee.* He is the moſt proper object of our love; for we chiefly were framed, and it is the *prime law* of our nature to love him; our Soul from original inſtinct vergeth toward him as its centre, and can have no reſt till it be fixed on him; he alone can ſatisfie the vaſt capacity of our minds, and fill our boundleſs deſires. Pſal. 89. 6. Pſal. 73. 25. Matt. 22. 38.

He of all lovely things, moſt certainly and eaſily may be attained; for whereas commonly men are croſſed in their affection, and their love is embittered from their affecting things imaginary, which they cannot reach, or coy things, which diſdain and reject their affection; it is concerning God quite otherwiſe; for,

He is moſt ready to impart himſelf, and *will not reject any that cometh unto him*; He moſt earneſtly deſireth, and woeth our love; He is not onely moſt willing to correſpond in affection, but doth prevent us therein; for *we love him,* (ſaith the *Apoſtle*) *becauſe he firſt loved us.* John 6. 37. Pſal. 70. 4. 2 Cor. 5. 20. John 14. 21, 23.

He doth cheriſh and encourage our love by ſweeteſt influences, and moſt comfortable embraces, by kindeſt expreſſions of favour, by moſt beneficial returns, ordering that *all things ſhall work together for good to thoſe who love him*: And whereas all other objects do in the enjoyment much fail our expectation, he doth ever far exceed it. Apoc. 3. 20. 1 John 4. 19. Rom. 8. 28. 1 Cor. 2. 9.

Wherefore in all affectionate motions of our hearts toward God, in deſiring him, or ſeeking his favour and friendſhip; in embracing him, or ſetting our eſteem, our good-will, our confidence on him; in enjoying him by devotional meditations, and addreſſes to him; in a reflective ſenſe of

1 Cor. 6. 17. Acts 11. 23. Deut. 10. 20. John 15. 4, 6. of our intereſt and propriety in him; in that myſterious union of ſpirit, hereby we do cloſely adhere to him, and are (as it were) inſerted in him; in a hearty complacence in his benignity, a grateful reſentment of his kindneſs, and a zealous deſire of yeilding ſome requital for it, we cannot but feel very pleaſant tranſports, aſſuring to us the truth of that ſaying in the *Pſalm, They that love thy name ſhall be joyful in thee*; and diſpoſing us to cry out with the *Pſalmiſt, How excellent is thy loving kindneſs, O Lord, Becauſe thy loving kindneſs is better than life, my lips ſhall praiſe thee.*

Pſal. 5. 12. Pſal. 36. 7.— Pſal. 63. 3.

Indeed that celeſtial flame (kindled in our hearts by the ſpirit of love) cannot be void of warmth; we cannot fix our eyes upon infinite beauty, we cannot taſt infinite ſweetneſs, we cannot cleave to infinite felicity, without we ſhould alſo perpetually rejoice in the firſt daughter of love to God, charity toward men; the which in complection and chearful diſpoſition doth much reſemble its mother: For it doth rid all thoſe gloomy, keen, turbulent imaginations and paſſions, which cloud our mind, which fret our heart, which diſcompoſe the frame of our ſoul; (from burning anger, from ſtorming contention, from gnawing envy, from rankling ſpite, from racking ſuſpicion, from diſtracting ambition and avarice.) It conſequently doth ſettle our mind in an even temper, in a ſedate humour, in an harmonious order, in that pleaſant ſtate of tranquillity, which naturally doth reſult from the voidance of irregular paſſions.

And who can enumerate or expreſs the pleaſures which do wait on every kind, on each act of charity?

How triumphant a joy is there in any-wiſe doing good? whereby we feed good humour, and gratify our beſt inclinations, whereby we oblige our brethren and endear our ſelves to them, whereby we moſt reſemble the divine goodneſs, and attract the divine favour?

2 Cor. 9. 7. Rom. 12. 8. Deut. 15. 10. Ecclus 35. 10.

St. *Paul* telleth us, that *God loveth a chearful giver*; and he preſcribeth, that *he who ſheweth mercy*, ſhould do it ἐν ἱλαρότητι *with merrineſs*; And in the Law it is commanded, *Thine heart ſhall not grieve, when thou giveſt to thy poor brother*; And who indeed can out of charity give alms, or ſhew mercy, without chearfulneſs? ſeeing that he thereby doth ſatisfy his own mind, and doth eaſe his own bowels; conſidering that in doing good to his neighbour he receiveth far more good to himſelf; that he then doth put forth his ſtock to very great and moſt certain advantage; that he diſchargeth an office very acceptable to God, doth much oblige him, and render him a debter, doth engage him abundantly to requite and reward that beneficence.

What ſatisfaction is there in forgiving offences; whereby we diſcharge our ſouls from vexatious inmates (black thoughts, and rancorous animoſities;) whereby we clear our ſelves from the troubles attending feuds and ſtrifes; whereby we imitate our moſt gratious Creatour, and tranſcribe the pattern of our meek Redeemer; whereby we render our ſelves capable of divine mercy, and acquire a good title to the pardon of our own ſins: according to that divine word, *If you forgive men their treſpaſſes, your heavenly Father will forgive you.*

Matt. 11. 25. 25. 35.

How unconfinedly and inexhauſtibly vaſt is that delight, which a charitable complacence in the good of our neighbour (*a rejoicing with thoſe that rejoice*) may afford? a man thence engroſſing all the good in the World, and appropriating to himſelf all the proſperous ſucceſſes, all the pleaſant entertainments, all the comfortable ſatisfactions of his neighbour.

Rom. 12. 15. 1 Cor. 13. 6. Rom. 12. 15.

Even a charitable ſympathy, or condolency, in the adverſities of our neighbour, is not deſtitute of content; for the ſoul is thereby melted into

a gentle

a gentle temper, ſuſceptive of the beſt impreſſions; we ſhare in the comfort, which we miniſter to others; we are refreſhed in that kindly ſubmiſſion to the good pleaſure of God, in that lightſome contemplation of God's mercy, in thoſe comfortable hopes of a happy iſſue, which we ſuggeſt to the afflicted; We thence are expoſed to a grateful ſenſe of God's goodneſs, in preſerving our ſelves from thoſe calamities, and in qualifying us to comfort our brethren; We feel ſatisfaction in reflecting upon this very practice, and obſerving that we do act conformably to good nature, to the dictates of reaſon, to the will of God, therein diſcharging a good conſcience, and enjoying a portion of that *continual feaſt*.

2 Cor. 1. 6. 7. 7.

Συμπαρακλῆσαι. Rom. 1. 12.

I ſhould, if the time would permit, farther declare how we ſhould find delight in the contemplation, of all God's attributes, of his works, of his word; in thankful reſentment of all God's benefits; in willing obedience to all God's Laws; how joy is a proper fruit growing on the practice of humility, of juſtice, of temperance, of devotion, of every vertue and grace; More particularly I ſhould have evidenced how from a patient ſubmiſſion to God's afflicting hand, from penitential contrition of heart for our ſins, from a pious fear and ſolicitude in working out our ſalvation, moſt ſweet conſolations (ſo tempering thoſe ingredients, as to render their bitterneſs very ſavoury) may ſpring; But in recommending joy I would not produce grief; and therefore ſhall not farther annoy your patience.

SERMON XII.

Keep thy Heart with all diligence, &c.

PROV. IV. 23.

Keep thy Heart with all diligence, &c.

BEFORE we do apply our ſelves to inculcate this Precept, it is requiſite that we ſhould ſomewhat explain the terms, and ſettle the meaning thereof; in doing that, we begin with the laſt Words, which qualify the action injoined as to its degree, or extent: *with all diligence*; the words (מִכָּל־מִשְׁמָר) anſwering to theſe in the *Hebrew*, do, according to the various uſe, or force of the particle מִן, admit a threefold acception. They may (1.) denote abſolutely the intenſeneſs in degree or extenſion in kind of the performance required in

this Precept: πάσῃ φυλακῇ τήρει τὴν καρδίαν, *Omni cuſtodia ſerva cor tuum*; keep thy heart with all cuſtody, that is, with all ſorts, or with all degrees of care and diligence; ſo the LXX *Interpreters*, and the *Vulgar Latin* following them, render thoſe words. They may (2.) taking the particle for a *Mem excellentiæ*, as they call it, ſignify comparatively; *præ omni cuſtodia ſerva cor tuum*; keep thy heart above all keeping; that is, eſpecially and more than thou keepeſt any other thing; ſo doth *Pagnin* underſtand them, not without cauſe, both for the reaſon ſubjoined here, *becauſe from it are the iſſues of life*; that is, becauſe it is the principal part and fountain of all vital operations, and therefore deſerveth the beſt cuſtody; as alſo for that in what follows, and in other places of Scripture frequently we are injoyned to keep our tongues from bad diſcourſe, our eyes from wandring after bad objects, our feet from declining to bad courſes; and therefore probably in compariſon to theſe, although needful and inferiour cuſtodies, we are admoniſhed to this moſt eſpecially incumbent cuſtody of our hearts. They may alſo (3.) and that probably enough be taken ſo as to denote the univerſality of the object or matter of this keeping, or the adequate term and bound thereof, keep thy heart, ἀπὸ παντὸς φυλάγματος, *ab omni re cuſtodienda*, from every thing which it ſhould be kept from; that is from every thing offenſive or hurtful to it: So did *Aquila* and *Theodotion* tranſlate the words. Theſe ſenſes are all of them good, and each may fairly pretend to find place in the meaning of the words; which of them with moſt likelihood I ſhall not diſcuſs, meaning only to inſiſt upon the ſubſtance of the Precept; the nature of which being duly conſidered, will infer that it is to be obſerved according to the manner and meaſure preſcribed, underſtood according to any of thoſe ſenſes, or according to all of them conjointly.

As for the meaning of the words, *Keep thy heart*; two enquiries may be made: 1. what the heart is, which *Solomon* adviſeth us to keep; what to keep it doth import.

To the *firſt* I anſwer, that in the ſtyle of Scripture the heart doth commonly import the whole inward man, the ὁ ἔσω ἄνθρωπος, *the man within us*, (as St. *Paul* ſpeaketh) the ὁ κρυπτὸς τῆς καρδίας ἄνθρωπος, *the hidden man of the heart* (as St. *Peter* calleth it) comprehending all the thoughts and imaginations, all the inclinations and diſpoſitions; all the judgments and opinions, all the paſſions and affections; all the reſolutions and purpoſes formed within us; in ſhort, all interiour, whether tendencies to move, or actual motions of humane Soul. For the *Scripture* (by the way we may obſerve it) ſeemeth to favour that anciently moſt common and current opinion (embraced by *Ariſtotle* himſelf, even as true in ſtrict Philoſophy, although rejected by moſt of the latter Schools) that the heart, that material part and principal entrail of the Body, is the chief ſeat of the Soul, and immediate inſtrument of its nobleſt operations. However, becauſe the heart in a man's breaſt is moſt inwardly ſeated, moſt ſecluded from ſight, guarded from acceſs, fenced from danger, thence whatever is inmoſt, moſt inviſible, moſt inacceſſible in any thing is called the heart thereof; and all a man's ſecret thoughts, inclinations, opinions, affections, deſigns are involved in this name; ſometimes all, or divers of them conjunctly are called his heart, ſometimes any one of them ſingly (as there is ſubject or occaſion of uſing the word) is ſo termed: Inſtances in every kind are innumerably many, and very obvious; and therefore I ſhall not ſpend time in producing any, but ſhall ſuppoſe that here the word may be underſtood in its utmoſt extent, ſo as to comprehend all

Rom. 7. 22.
1 Pet. 3. 4.

the

the particulars intimated; there being no apparent reaſon for preferring, or excluding any; all of them being capable of moral quality, both ſimply and immediately in themſelves, and conſequentially as they may be the principles of good or bad actions; and becauſe all of them may be, need to be, ought to be the objects of the keeping here injoined.

But then what is this *keeping*? I anſwer, that the Word as applied to this matter is eſpecially capable of three ſenſes, each of which may be exemplified.

1. It may imply to obſerve, that is, to keep it under a conſtant view, as it were; to mark, or attend unto, to inquire into and ſtudy our heart. So, *My ſon* (ſaith the *Wiſe-man*) *give me thy heart, and let thine eyes keep* (or obſerve) *my ways*; the ſame word which here, is there uſed both in the *Hebrew* and *Greek*, and can there well ſignify no other cuſtody, but that of attending unto; it being the office of the eye onely to look, and obſerve. Likewiſe, *Obſerve* (ſaith God in the Law) *and hear all theſe words which I command thee*; that is, hear them very attentively: And ſo in divers other places. Prov. 23. 26. Deut. 12. 28.

2. It may alſo denote the governance, or good management of our hearts; keeping all the motions thereof in due order, within fit compaſs; applying them to good, and reſtraining them from bad things: So the *Pſalmiſt* uſeth the word, when he ſaith, *I will keep my mouth with a bridle*; that is, I will ſo rule and curb it, that no evil language ſhall iſſue from it: So when the *Wiſe-man* adviſeth to *keep our foot when we go to the houſe of God*; by keeping it, he means rightly to guide and order our proceedings; or well to diſpoſe our ſelves when we addreſs our ſelves to religious performances: So again, *He* (ſaith he) *that keepeth the Fig-tree, ſhall eat the fruit thereof*; he that keepeth it, that is, he that dreſſeth and ordereth it to advantage for bearing fruit. Pſal. 39. 1. Eccleſ. 5. 1. Prov. 27. 18.

3. Again, keeping may be taken for preſerving, guarding, ſecuring from miſchief or damage: which indeed is the moſt common uſe of the word; and therefore we need no inſtancing to countenance it.

Now any of theſe ſenſes may be intended here, or all of them together; and they indeed are in the nature of the thing ſo coherent, or ſo mutually dependent one on the other, that any one of them can hardly be practiſed without the reſt: For without heedfully obſerving our heart we cannot well govern it; and an ill-governed heart cannot eaſily be attended to; and without both watchful obſervation, and skilful management of it we cannot guard it from evil; and reciprocally without guarding it, we cannot well rule it, or duly mind it: ſuch a complication there is in practice of theſe three cuſtodies.

I ſhall at preſent onely diſcourſe concerning the firſt of them, which ſeems in the nature of things, and according to our method of acting to precede. According to this expoſition, when 'tis ſaid, *Keep thy heart with all diligence*, we may underſtand it, as if each of us were thus adviſed: With a moſt conſtant and wary care obſerve all the interiour propenſions and motions of thy ſoul; whatever is done, or deſigned within thee; whither thy deſires lean, what thy affections are ſtirred by, to what thy judgment of things doth lead thee, with greateſt attention and aſſiduity mark and ponder it.

It is a peculiar excellency of humane nature, which ſeemeth more to diſtinguiſh a man from any inferiour rank of creatures, than bare reaſon it ſelf, that he can reflect upon all that is done within him, can diſcern the tendencies of his ſoul, is acquainted with his own purpoſes; ſome ſha-

dows of other rational operations are diſcoverable in beaſts, and 'tis not eaſie to convince them, who from plauſible experiments do affirm them ſometimes to ſyllogize; but no good reaſon or experience can (I ſuppoſe) make it probable, that they partake of this reflexive faculty; that they do ever regard, or remark upon their own imaginations; they ſeem always to march directly forward with a blind impetuouſneſs toward ſome pleaſing object, without attending to the fancy that guides them, or the appetite which excites them: neither indeed do they ſeem to need any ſuch power in order to the preſervation of their life, or gratifying of their ſenſe, which are the main ends they were deſigned and fitted for. But man being deſigned by his Maker, diſpoſed by the frame of his nature, and obliged by a Law impoſed on him not to follow caſual impulſes from exteriour objects, nor the bare conduct of his imagination, nor the ſway of his natural propenſities, but to regulate as well the internal workings of his ſoul, as his external actions according to certain Laws or rules preſcribed him; to ſettle his thoughts upon due objects, to bend his inclinations into a right frame, to conſtrain his affections within due bounds, to rectify his judgments of things, to ground his purpoſes upon honeſt reaſons, and direct them unto lawful matters; it is needful, that he ſhould have this power of diſcerning whatever moveth, or paſſeth within him; what he thinks upon, whither he inclines, how he judgeth, whence he is affected, wherefore he doth reſolve; without this power he could not be a moral agent, not able to perform any duty, not properly ſubject to any Law, not liable to render an accompt of his doings: Did he not perceive his own thoughts, how could he diſpel them, when they are bad, or vain? might he not obſerve his own inclinations, how could he ſtrive to reſtrain them, or to reform them, when they draw to unlawful practices? were he not ſenſible of his affections, how could he endeavour to reduce or compoſe them, when they become exorbitant or tumultuous? were he not conſcious of his own opinions, how could he weigh, and examine them; how could he conform his actions to them, or practice according to the dictates of his conſcience? 'tis therefore plainly needful that man ſhould be endewed with this power, for that without it he can neither perform the duty required of him, nor enjoy the benefits he is capacified, and deſigned for: Our Maker therefore hath conferred it upon us, our duty conſiſts in its right uſe, our advantage ariſeth from the conſtant and careful exerciſe of this excellent faculty: Conſtant and careful, I ſay: *conſtant*, for obſervation implies ſo much; for, if ever we ſhut our eyes, or turn our heads aſide, what we look to may be gone; much therefore will paſs away undiſcerned and unobſerved by us; eſpecially ſuch quick and fleeting things as are the interiour motions of our ſoul will eſcape; wherefore a continual vigilancy is requiſite to a keeper of the heart: It muſt alſo be *careful*, as the keeper of a thing ſo nimble and ſlippery muſt not ſleep, ſo he muſt not ſlumber; he muſt not be oſcitant, but very intent upon his charge; ſuperficial glances upon the outward face, as it were, of the ſoul will not ſuffice; to *obſerve* is with earneſt care to look through the matter; to diſcern whatever lurketh therein, to pierce into the very depth and bottom of it, to ſpy through every nook and corner therein; otherwiſe 'tis but ſlightly viewed rather than truly obſerved: eſpecially ſo ſubtile, ſo intricate, ſo obſcure a thing as a man's heart is requireth an extraordinary application of mind in obſerving it with judgement and fruit.

This is then our duty, recommended by the Wiſe-man, to be continu-

ally

ally with extream diligence looking inward upon our ſelves, obſerving what thoughts ſpring up within us, what imaginations find moſt welcom harbour in our breaſts, what objects moſt affect us with delight, or diſpleaſure (what it is that we love and readily embrace; what we diſtaſt and preſently reject) what prejudices do poſſeſs our minds; wherefore we propoſe to our ſelves ſuch undertakings; converſing with our ſelves, and as it were diſcourſing in this manner: What is it that I think upon, are my thoughts ſerious, ſeaſonable, and pure? whither do I propend; are my inclinations compliant to God's Law, and good reaſon? what judgments do I make of things; are my apprehenſions clear, ſolid, ſure, built upon no corrupt prejudice? what doth moſt eaſily ſtir me, and how is my heart moved; are my affections calm, and orderly, and well placed? what plots do I contrive, what projects am I driving on; are my deſigns good, are my intentions upright and ſincere? let me throughly enquire into theſe points, let me be fully ſatisfied in them; thus ſhould we continually be doing. The holy Scripture doth often bid us to judge our ſelves, to examine our works; to ſearch and try; to weigh, to heed, to watch over our ways: *If* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *we would judge* (diſcern, or diſtinguiſh) *our ſelves, we ſhould not be judged*; that is, we ſhould avoid thoſe miſcarriages, which bring the divine judgments upon us: and, *Let us* (ſaith the Prophet *Jeremy*) *ſearch and try our ways, and turn unto the Lord*; and, *I ſaid I will take heed to my ways* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*;) and, *Ponder the Path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be eſtabliſhed*, is the Wiſeman's advice: Search our ways, and ponder our paths, this implies, that we firſt do examine, and weigh our hearts; for there our ways begin, thence is motion derived to our feet; and to our hands alſo: All our actions depend as effects of them, all do receive their moral quality thence: Whatever in our doings is good or bad ἔσωθεν ἐκπορεύεται, doth (as our Lord expreſſeth it) iſſue from within us; our actions are but ſtreams ſweet or bitter, clear or foul according to the tincture they receive at thoſe inward ſources of good, or evil inclinations, of true or falſe judgments, of pure or corrupt intention; there conſequently we are principally obliged, to exerciſe the ſcrutiny and trial required of us.

1 Cor. 11. 31. Gal. 6. 4. Ἐι ἑαυτὲς διεκρίνομεν. Lam. 3. 40. Pſal. 39. 1. Prov. 4. 26. Mark 7. 23.

Socrates is reported to have much admired that Verſe in *Homer*,

Ὅτ∫ι τοι ἐν μεγάροιοι κακὸν τ' ἀγαθόν τε τέτυκ∫αι.

affirming that in it the ſum of all Wiſdom is comprized: the ſenſe and drift thereof being this; as he took it: Seek and ſtudy what good or bad is at home, within thy houſe; ſee how all goes in thy breaſt; employ thy chief inquiry upon the affairs of thy ſoul; there confining thy curioſity and care. Gell. *XIV.* 6.

Such is the duty; and the practice thereof is of huge profit and uſe; bringing many great benefits and advantages with it; the neglect of it is attended with many grievous inconveniences and miſchiefs, and for perſwading to the one, diſſwading from the other I ſhall propound ſome of them, ſuch as are moſt obvious, and offer themſelves to my meditation.

The moſt general, and moſt immediate advantage ariſing hence is this, that by ſuch a conſtant and careful inſpection, or ſtudy upon our hearts, we may arrive to a competent knowledge of, and a true acquaintance with our ſelves (a moſt uſeful knowledge, a moſt beneficial acquaintance) neither of them being otherwiſe attainable. *The heart* (as you know the Prophet ſays) *is deceitful above all things*; and, *who* (adds he) *can know it*? who can know it: none it ſeems, but God that made it; and the Jer. 17. 9.

the man, that hath it: he that hath it, muſt, I ſay, be able competently to know it; even in regard to him the queſtion may intimate ſome difficulty, but it doth not denote an abſolute impoſſibility: Hard it may be for us to know the heart by reaſon of its deceitfulneſs; but the ſlieſt impoſture, if narrowly looked into, may be detected: 'Tis a very ſubtile and abſtruſe, a very various and mutable thing; the multiplicity of objects it doth converſe with, the divers alterations it is ſubject to from bodily temper, cuſtom, company, example, other unaccomptable cauſes; eſpecially its proneneſs to comply with, and to ſute its judgments of things unto preſent circumſtances without, and preſent appetites within do render it ſuch; wherefore it is not indeed eaſie to know it; but yet poſſible it is; for under ſevere penalties we are obliged not to be deceived by it, or which is all one, not to ſuffer it to be deceived: *Let no man* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *deceive himſelf: ſee that ye be not deceived*, ſaith our *Saviour*; *Take heed* (ſaith *Moſes*) *to your ſelves, that your heart be not deceived*; ſuch Precepts there are many, obliging us to know our hearts, and to diſcover the fallacies put on them, or upon us by them; carrying with them directions how to compaſs it; that is, by looking about us, and taking heed; (by careful circumſpection and caution) It is therefore a feaſible thing to avoid being impoſed upon, and well to underſtand our ſelves: But as other abſtruſe pieces of knowledge, ſo this eſpecially cannot be attained without induſtrious applications of our mind, and conſtant obſervations, to find the corners wherein the deceit lurks; we muſt purſue its ſecret windings and intrigues; we muſt trace it ſtep by ſtep (as Hunters do wild Beaſts) into the utmoſt receſſes of its firſt deſires, and moſt deeply radicated prejudices; we muſt do as *David* did, when he ſtrove to free himſelf from diſtruſt and impatience in his ſtraits: *I communed with my own heart* (ſaith he) *and my ſpirit made diligent ſearch*; by which practice he found, as he farther acquaints us, that it was *his infirmity*, which moved him to doubt of God's mercy and benignity toward him. *Cicero* having ſomewhere commended Philoſophy as the moſt excellent gift by Heaven beſtowed upon man, aſſigns this reaſon; *becauſe it teaches us, as all other things, ſo eſpecially this of all moſt difficult thing, to know our ſelves:* but he, with his favour, doth ſeem to promiſe for his friend more than ſhe is able to perform; the main part of this knowledge doth lye beyond the reach of any particular method; the Empirick ſeems to have more to do here than the Doctour: Philoſophy may perhaps afford us ſome plauſible notions concerning the nature of our ſoul; its ſtate, its power, its manners of acting; it may preſcribe ſome wide directions about proceeding in the diſcovery of our ſelves; but the particular knowledge (and therein the chief difficulty lieth) of our ſelves, how our ſouls ſtand inclined and diſpoſed, that onely our particular earneſt ſtudy, and aſſiduous obſervation can yeild unto us; and it is an ineſtimable advantage to obtain it. All men are very curious and inquiſitive after knowledge, the being endued therewith paſſeth for a goodly ornament, a rich poſſeſſion, a matter of great ſatisfaction, and much uſe; Men are commonly aſhamed of nothing ſo much as ignorance; but if any knowledge meriteth eſteem for its worth and uſefulneſs, this next to that concerning Almighty God, may ſurely beſt pretend thereto; if any ignorance deſerveth blame, this certainly is moſt liable thereto: to be ſtudious in contemplating natural effects, and the cauſes whence they proceed; to be verſed in the writings and ſtories of other mens doings; to be pragmatical obſervers of what is ſaid or done without

1 Cor. 3. 18. Luke 21. 8. Deut. 11. 16.

Pſ. 77. 6, 10.

Hæc enim una nos cum cæteras res omnes, tum quod eſt difficillimum docuit, ut noſmetipſos noſceremus. Cic. *de* Leg. 1.

without us (that which perchance may little concern, little profit us to know) and in the mean while to be ſtrangers at home, to overlook what paſſeth in our own breaſts, to be ignorant of our moſt near and proper concernments, is a folly, if any, to be derided, or rather greatly to be pitied, as the ſource of many great inconveniences to us. For it is from ignorance of our ſelves that we miſtake our ſelves for other Perſons than we really are, and accordingly we behave our ſelves toward our ſelves with great indecency and injuſtice; we aſſume and attribute to our ſelves that which doth not any-wiſe belong unto us, or become us: As put caſe we are ignorant of the Perſons we converſe with, as to their quality, their merit, their humour; we ſhall be apt to miſcal, and miſtake them; to misbehave our ſelves in our demeanour toward them; to yeild them more or leſs reſpect than befits them; to croſs them rudely, or unhandſomly to humour them: In like manner, if we be ſtrangers to our hearts, ſhall we carry our ſelves toward our own ſelves: We ſhall hence, like men in a frenzy, take our ſelves for extraordinary People, rich and noble, and mighty, when indeed our condition being duly eſtimated, we are wretchedly mean and beggarly. We do frequently hug our ſelves (or rather ſhadows in our room) admiring our ſelves for qualities not really being in us; applauding our ſelves for actions nothing worth; ſuch as proceed from ill principles, and aim at bad ends, whenas did we turn our thoughts inwards, and regard what we find in our hearts, by what inclinations we are moved, upon what grounds we proceed, we ſhould be aſhamed, and ſee cauſe rather to bemoan, than to bleſs our ſelves: Deſcending into our ſelves we might perchance diſcern that moſt of our gallant performances (ſuch as not conſidering our hearts we preſume them to be) are derived from ſelf-love, or pride; from deſire of honour, or love of gain; from fear of damage or diſcredit in the World, rather than out of love, reverence, and gratitude toward God, of charity, compaſſion, and good-will toward our brethren, of ſober regard to our own true welfare and happineſs; which are the onely commendable principles, and grounds of action: St. *Luke* telleth us of certain men, who *perſwaded themſelves that they were righteous, and deſpiſed others*; upon occaſion of whom our Saviour dictateth the Parable of the *Phariſee* and *Publican*; whence think we came that fond confidence in themſelves, and proud contempt of others? from ignorance ſurely of themſelves, or from not obſerving thoſe bad diſpoſitions, thoſe wrong opinions, thoſe corrupt fountains within, from whence their ſuppoſed righteous deeds did flow. *If any man* (ſaith St. *Paul*, giving an accompt of ſuch preſumptions) *thinks himſelf to be ſomething, when he is nothing,* ἑαυτὸν φρεναπατᾷ *he cheats himſelf in his mind*; *but let every man examine his work, and then he ſhall have rejoicing in himſelf alone* (or, privately with himſelf) ſome, he implieth, do impoſe upon, and delude themſelves, imagining themſelves ſome-bodies (indued forſooth with admirable qualities, or to have atchieved very worthy deeds) whenas, if they would enquire into themſelves, they ſhould find no ſuch matter; that themſelves were no ſuch Men, and their Works no ſuch Wonders: But if (ſaith he) a Man doth δοκιμάζειν ἑαυτῷ τὸ ἔργον, implore and examine what he doeth, and in reſult thereof doth clearly perceive, that he acteth upon good reaſons, and with honeſt intentions, then may he indeed injoy a ſolid interiour ſatisfaction (a true καύχημα, or exultation of mind) whatever others, not acquainted with thoſe inward ſprings of his motion, do pleaſe to judge of him,

Rev. 3. 17.

Ut nemo in ſeſe tentat deſcendere, nemo,

Luke 18. 7.

Ῥᾷζον ἑαυτὸν ἀπατᾶν. καὶ οἴεσθαι εἶναι τι δέον ὄντα, ὑπὸ τῆς κενῆς δόξης φυσιώμενον. Nazianz. *Orat.* 27.

Gal. 6. 3.

Πρὸς ἑαυτὸν μόνον.

him, and his proceedings. No man indeed can truly value himſelf, or well approve of his own doings, ſo as to find any perfect comfort in himſelf, or in them, who doth not by ſtudying himſelf diſcover whence, and why he acts: One may be a flatterer, but cannot be a true friend to himſelf, who doth not thoroughly acquaint himſelf with his own inward ſtate; who doth not frequently conſult, and converſe with himſelf: A friend to himſelf, I ſaid, and to be ſo is one of the greateſt benefits that humane life can enjoy; that which will moſt ſweeten and ſolace our life to us: friendſhip with others (with perſons honeſt and intelligent) is a great accommodation, helping much to allay the troubles, and eaſe the burthens of life; but friendſhip with our ſelves is much more neceſſary to our well-being: for we have continual opportunities and obligations to converſe with our ſelves; we do ever need aſſiſtence, advice and comfort at home: and as commonly 'tis long acquaintance, and familiar entercourſe together, which doth conciliate one man to another, begetting mutual dearneſs and confidence, ſo it is toward ones ſelf: As no man can be a friend to a mere ſtranger, or to one whoſe temper, whoſe humour, whoſe deſigns he is ignorant of; ſo cannot he be a friend to himſelf, if he be unacquainted with his own diſpoſition and meaning: he cannot in ſuch a caſe rely upon his own advice, or aid, when need is; but will ſuſpect, and diſtruſt himſelf; he cannot be pleaſant company to himſelf, but ſhall be ready to croſs, and fall out with himſelf; he cannot adminiſter conſolation to his own griefs and diſtreſſes; his privacy will become a deſertion, his retirement a mere ſolitude. But paſſing over this general advantage, I ſhall with ſome more minuteneſs of diſtinction conſider divers particular advantages accruing from the practice of this duty, together with the oppoſite inconveniences, which are conſequent upon the neglect thereof, in the following Diſcourſe.

—*patriæ quis exul ſe quoque fugit?*

Αὐτὸς σεαυτῷ χρῶ συμβούλῳ, καὶ τῷ θεῷ. Naz. *Epiſt.* 60.

Ἔνιοι δὲ ἴδιον βίον ὡς ἀτερπέστατον θέμα φεύγειν ἐκ ὑπομένουσιν, ἐδ' ἀναπλάσαι δὲ λογισμῷ ὡς φῶς ἐφ' ἑαυτὸς καὶ περιαγαγεῖν· ἀλλ' ἡ ψυχὴ γέμουσα κακῶν παντοδαπῶν, καὶ φειδομένη, καὶ φοβερὰν τὰ ἔνδον, ἐκπλῆξαι δύσεως, &c. Plut. *de Curioſ. p.* 916.

SERMON XIII.

Keep thy Heart with all diligence, &c.

PROV. IV. 23.

Keep thy Heart with all diligence, &c.

I Proceed to the particular advantages of the practice of this duty, and the inconveniences of the neglect of it.

1. The conſtant and careful obſervation of our hearts will ſerve to prevent immoderate ſelf-love, and ſelf-conceit; to render us ſober and modeſt in our opinions concerning, and in our affections toward our ſelves;

ſelves; qualifying us to comply with the Apoſtolical Precept, μὴ φρονεῖν ὑπὲρ ὃ δεῖ φρονεῖν, that is not to overween, or overvalue our ſelves, and our own things: for he that by ſerious inſpection upon his own heart, ſhall diſcern how many fond, impure, and ugly thoughts do ſwarm within him; how averſe his inclinations are from good, and how prone to evil; how much his affections are miſplaced, and diſtempered (while he vehemently delights in the poſſeſſion, and impotently frets for the want of trifles, having ſmall content in the fruition, and but ſlender diſpleaſure for the abſence of the greateſt goods; while empty hopes exalt him, and idle fears deject him; while other various paſſions, like ſo many tempeſts, drive, and toſs him all about) who ſhall obſerve, how clouds of darkneſs, errour and doubt do hover upon the face of his ſoul; ſo that he quickly taketh up opinions, and ſoon layeth them down, and often turneth from one miſtake unto another; how unſettled his reſolutions are, eſpeciallv in the purſuance of the beſt goods; and what corrupt mixtures cleave to his beſt purpoſes; who taketh notice how backward he is unto, and how cold in devotions toward God, how little ſenſible of his goodneſs, or fearful of his diſpleaſure, or zealous for his honour, or careful of performing his duty toward him; how little alſo it is that he deſireth, or delighteth in the good, that he pitieth, and grieveth at the evil of his neighbour; how ſluggiſh alſo and remiſs he is in the purſuance of his own beſt affairs, and higheſt concernments; he that doth, I ſay, frequently with heedfulneſs regard theſe imperfections and obliquities in his own heart, how can he be raviſhed with ſelf-love? how can he be much taken with himſelf? can any man dote upon ſuch deformity, admire ſuch weakneſs and naughtineſs? No ſurely; that men are ſo amorous of themſelves, ſo haughty and arrogant in their conceits, doth conſtantly ariſe from not reflecting on their own hearts; not beholding themſelves wiſtly enough in that mirrour; not conſidering according to juſt repreſentation there how little lovely, or worthy they are: If they did practice that, they would ſee reaſon, and thence become inclinable rather to deſpiſe, to loath, to pity themſelves.

2. Upon that advantage is conſequent, that this practice will diſpoſe us with equanimity, and patience to bear all croſſes and grievances befalling us; ſo producing not onely an excellent vertue, but a conſiderable ſolace to us; for the being conſcious of ſo much unworthineſs, which obſervation of our heart will neceſſarily diſcover, will not onely juſtify the providence, (ſo removing all juſt cauſe of complaint) but will commend the benignity of God unto us (ſo adminiſtring good matter of thanks.) It will prompt us heartily to confeſs with thoſe in *Ezra*, that *our puniſhments are leſs than our deſervings*; to join in acknowledgment with the *Pſalmiſt*, that *God hath not dealt with us after our ſins*; *nor rewarded us according to our iniquities*; to ſay with *Jeremy*, *It is of the Lord's mercy, that we are not conſumed, becauſe his compaſſions fail not*; with *Jacob*, *I am leſs than any of thy mercies.*

Leniter ex merito quicquid patiare ferendum eſt. Ovid. *Ep.* 5.

Ezra 9. 13.

Pſal. 103. 10.

Lam. 3. 22.

Gen. 32. 10.

3. Particularly this Practice will fence us againſt immoderate diſpleaſure occaſionable by Men's hard opinions, or raſh cenſures paſſed on us: For he that by inquiry into himſelf perceives ſo many defects in himſelf, will not ſo eaſily, nor ſo greatly be offended, if ſome of them (or ſome like to them) be objected to him; ſince he finds himſelf truly liable to many more, and greater. *Epictetus*, his advice is, when you are told, that any Man ſpeaks ill of you, that you ſhould not apologize, but anſwer onely, that he was ignorant of many other faults of yours, or he would

not onely have mentioned thoſe: To be diſpoſed without diſſembling, or affection to follow his counſel would argue a man very intelligent of himſelf, and well prepared to endure happily, and handſomely encounters of this kind, which every man ſhall be ſure to meet with. None indeed can ſo contentedly brook reproach, or blame, as he that by intimate acquaintance with his own heart doth know the cenſure paſſed on him to be in effect mild and favourable; as finding himſelf a witneſs of more faults, than any adverſary can accuſe him of; as being a ſtricter examiner, and ſeverer judge of himſelf than the moſt envious eye, or diſaffected mind can be. It is alſo ſome comfort, that if cenſures be very outragious, a Man by knowledge of himſelf (by knowing his own diſpoſitions, if his perſon be diſfigured by a very ill character; by knowing his own purpoſes, if his actions be grievouſly aſperſed) is certain they are ſuch; that he can be as well a faithful witneſs, and juſt Judge for himſelf, as againſt himſelf.

4. Likewiſe this practice will defend us, as from the diſcomforts of harſh cenſure, ſo from the miſtakes and miſcarriages, to which the more favourable opinions of Men, or their flattering expreſſions (thoſe luſcious poiſons) may expoſe us.

Index ipſe ſui ſe totum explorat ad unguem
Quid proceres, vanique ferat quid opinio vulgi
Securus —

——*Nihil eſt quod credere de ſe*
Non poſſit, cum laudatur ——

'Tis not onely true of great Men, but even of all men: The common nature of men diſpoſeth them to be credulous, when they are commended, or receive any ſignification of eſteem from others: Every ear is tickled with this ἥδιστον ἄκουσμα, this ſweet muſick of applauſe: But we are not to relye upon others imperfect and ill-grounded judgment ſo much as upon our own more certain knowledge concerning our ſelves:

——*ne cui de te plus quam tibi credas.*

Take no man's word before thine own ſenſe, in what concerns thine own caſe and character, is an advice deſerving our regard and practice: For that a man in queſtions of this kind is able to be a skilful and indifferent Umpire between himſelf and others; that he is neither elevated, nor depreſſed in mind by external weights, but keepeth himſelf equally poiſed in a juſt conſiſtence by his own well-informed conſcience; that neither his heart is exaſperated with the bittereſt gall of reproach, nor his head intoxicated with the ſweeteſt wine of flattery, is an invaluable convenience of life; or rather it is a vertue arguing a moſt ſtrong and healthful conſtitution of ſoul. *How great a levity of mind, how great a vanity is it* (ſaith a good Father) *ſetting aſide a man's own conſcience to follow other men's opinion* (*and even that feigned and forged*) *to be ſnatched away by the wind of falſe praiſe, to rejoice in being circumvented, and to receive being mocked for a benefit?* From being thus abuſed, this practice alone can ſecure us: If we know our ſelves well, we cannot ſo eaſily be deluded by the miſtakes of others concerning us, on either hand.

Quæ hæc tanta levitas eſt animi, quæ tanta vanitas relicta propria conſcientia alienam opinionem ſequi, & quidem fictam, atqui ſimulatam; rapi vento falſæ laudationis, gaudere ad circumventionem ſuam, & illuſionem pro beneficio accipere? Hier. (*vel* Paullinus) *ad* Celant.

5. Likewiſe, farther upon the ſame this practice will conduce to qualifie our opinions, and moderate our paſſions toward others; ſo that without intemperate anger, or bitterneſs we may bear the faults, errours, and infirmities of our brethren; that we ſhall be benign in our carriage, and gentle in our cenſures even toward them, who do not behave themſelves ſo well and wiſely as they ſhould do. St. *Paul* thus admoniſheth the *Galathians, Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are ſpiritual* (the

Gal. 6. 1.

(the more ſpiritual whether in truth, or in our own eſteem, the more eſpecially are we obliged hereto) *reſtore ſuch an one in the ſpirit of meekneſs, conſidering thy ſelf, leſt thou may be alſo tempted*: σκοπῶν σεαυτὸν, looking upon, or ſpying into thy ſelf; ſuch conſidering our ſelves, taking notice of our own infirmity within, perceiving how ſubject we are to the impreſſions of temptation, and that hence it may be our own caſe to fall and faultre, if occaſion concur with our weakneſs; diſcerning this, I ſay, as it will be a reaſon obliging, ſo it may be an inſtrument conducing to a mitigation of ſpirit toward thoſe, whom we ſee overtaken with miſtake, or overborn by frailty. *Why doſt thou ſee a mote in thy brothers eye, but doſt not conſider the beam in thine own eye*? is our Saviour's queſtion; why a man ſhould do ſo there cannot (as he implies) any good reaſon be aſſigned; ('tis a very unreaſonable, and inexcuſable miſcarriage) but whence a man doeth ſo, is obvious and plain; it is, becauſe he curiouſly prys into other mens doings, and careleſly neglecteth the obſervation of his own heart: Did we reflect our ſight inwards, we ſhould be more apt to mark our own faults, and leſs ready to diſcover thoſe of others; or however we ſhould be more gently affected in regard to them: For he that knows himſelf a beggarly Wretch, will he reproach poverty to another? He that conſulting the glaſs doth find himſelf ill-favoured, will he upbraid another for want of grace or beauty? He that perceives that the dart will rebound, and thereby wound himſelf, will he not be careful of flinging it? Will a Man be forward in pronouncing a heavy ſentence againſt another, who conſiders himſelf by plain conſequence involved in the condemnation thereof? Should a Man do ſo, he doth at leaſt render himſelf uncapable of apology, or excuſe: So we are told by St. *Paul*: *Every cenſurer* (πᾶς ὁ κρίνων) *is*, ſaith he, *inexcuſable*; *for that in arraigning another he condemns himſelf*: guilty is he of inexcuſable folly, or impudence; of folly and blindneſs, if he ſee not; of extream impudence, if ſeeing his own obnoxiouſneſs he will not abſtain from judging others for that, of which himſelf is guilty in the ſame kind, or equivalently in ſome other. You know how *David* was caught by *Nathan*, and unwarily adjudged himſelf to death: And ſo may every Man expoſe himſelf, that is rigorous in cenſure toward others without reflecting on himſelf, and conſidering his own heart; wherein he ſhall find ſo much ground and matter of being angry with, and judging himſelf. If we will be fierce and keen, 'tis reaſon we ſhould be ſo firſt, and chiefly there, where our greateſt enemies do abide, whence moſt miſchief ariſeth to us; where there is fitteſt matter, and juſteſt cauſe of paſſion: Thus is this practice a moſt proper and effectual remedy for thoſe baneful vices of pride and peeviſhneſs in our ſelves, of malignity and fury toward others. But farther,

Marc. Ant. *XI.* 18.

Matt. 7. 2.

Rom. 2. 1.

2 Sam. 12.

Si volumus æqui rerum omnium judices eſſe, hoc primum nobis ſuadeamus, neminem eſſe noſtrum ſine culpa. Sen. *de Ir.*
Συγγνώμων ἔφη δεῖναι πᾶσι τοῖς ἁμαρτάνουσι, πρῶτον ἑαυτῷ. Cato *Maj.* Plut. p. 624.

6. The obſervation of our heart yeildeth great advantage in being very conducible to render Men truly wiſe and prudent; in thoſe things eſpecially, which moſt nearly concern them: Giving them to ſee before them, and to underſtand what they do; and to proceed without ſecurity; as contrarily the neglect thereof rendereth Men unadviſed and uncertain in their doings. A main point of prudence conſiſteth in ſuiting a Man's undertakings to his powers and capacities; in not attempting things ſurpaſſing his ability, or fitneſs; and in not declining ſuch uſeful, or beneficial attempts, as he may well compaſs. Some are overbold and raſh in ſetting upon things beyond their ſtrength to accompliſh, or skill to manage;

whence commonly with ſhame and ſorrow they are defeated in their enterprizes; Others are overbackward and diffident, ſo as not to adventure upon what they may with good advantage, or perhaps ought to perform; thence depriving themſelves of the benefits they might obtain, or omitting the duties, which they are obliged to; both which inconveniences uſually do proceed from the not looking into, and ſtudying the heart; for the moſt and greateſt impediments of action do lye there; being grounded upon inward indiſpoſitions, or diſagreeableneſs of Mens temper, capacity, inclination to the matters, to which they apply themſelves: A tender foot will be galled and lamed, if you ſet it going in rugged paths; a weak head will turn, if you place it high, or upon the brink of a precipice; a ſoft ſpirit cannot well comport with boiſterous employment; he that naturally affects calm and quiet, muſt not hope to come off well, if he engage himſelf upon affairs expoſed to abundance of care and tumult; nor will he if he be well ſtudied this way, and rightly underſtand himſelf, adventure thereupon. It was as well according to wiſdom, as modeſty, that *David* could ſay: *My heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty,* Pſal. 113. 1. *neither do I exerciſe my ſelf in great matters, or in things too high for me.* In every undertaking two things occur to be conſidered, what of difficulty is found therein, and what of temptation; whether it can be done, and whether it ſhould be done: It is a folly to ſpend our care and pain upon that, which is too hard for us to effect, and 'tis worſe than ſo to adventure upon that, which moſt probably will bring us into ſin, and hurt our ſouls; onely the ſtudy of our ſelves, weighing our power, and trying our temper, will prevent both: He that doeth this may commonly foreſee what the caſe being put he ſhall do; that if ſuch a temptation doth aſſault him in ſuch circumſtances, his inclinations will be apt to comply therewith, and he ſhall ſcarce be able to reſiſt (that for inſtance he ſhall wax haughty in a ſtate of dignity, become luxurious in abundance of wealth, be diſtracted with care in a buſie employment) and therefore he will not be ſo forward to ingage himſelf upon ſuch occaſions; danger and miſchief being ſo vividly pre-repreſented to his ſight. But he that pondereth not his own heart is ready to preſume, that be the buſineſs what it will, he ſhall come off well; and ſo unadviſedly ruſheth into the ſnare; he aſſumes unweildy burthens upon his ſhoulders, which he ſoon feeleth ſorely to oppreſs and pain him; which he can neither bear with eaſe, nor put off with convenience; When, for inſtance, the Prophet told *Hazael* 2 Kings 12. 8. what Cruelties and Rapines, ſhould (when he got power and opportunity) be committed by him; you ſee how he was ſtartled at the report: *am I a Dog*, ſaith he; that is, can I be ſo vile and baſe; yes, he might himſelf have perceived that he ſhould in likelihood be ſo; the probability of his doing, as the Prophet ſaid, had been no great news to him, if he had obſerved his own inclinations. Good *Agur* on the other ſide did better Prov. 30. 8. underſtand himſelf, when he prayed: *Give me neither poverty nor riches, but feed me with food convenient for me*; he was conſcious of natural infirmity, and therefore afraid of being in a condition that might prevail upon it; of great wealth, leſt it ſhould tempt him to forgetfulneſs, and neglect of God (*leſt*, ſaith he, *I be full and deny thee, and ſay who is the Lord?*) of extreme want, leſt it ſhould put him upon unjuſt, diſhoneſt and impious courſes to maintain his life; (*leſt*, adds he, *I be poor and ſteal, and take the name of my God in vain*;) he ſaw by looking into himſelf, that ſelf-love (the root of pride and injuſtice) was potent in him, and formidable, when occaſion ſhould favour it, and therefore by imploring divine aid, he ſtrove

ſtrove to decline the advantages and occaſions of it. It was good counſel which *Xenophon* tells us the *Oracle* gave *Craſus*, conſulting about the ſucceſs of his attempt againſt *Cyrus*, Σαυτὸν γνώσεσθαι δ'δαίμων Κεῖσε πεμπήσει · *Knowing thy ſelf thou ſhalt paſs on happily* (in the courſe of thy life and undertakings:) had he, conſidering his own ability, in relation to the dubious event of things (that as he could not promiſe himſelf good fortune, ſo he did not know how he ſhould comport with bad; being not ſure that he ſhould overcome either his enemies, or himſelf) thus, I ſay, had he complied with the *Oracle*'s advice, he might have eſcaped the loſs and ſorrow which befell him. So is it with us; if we know not the burthen of our Veſſel, we ſhall either put more ſail to it than it can bear, or leſs than will ſuffice to carry it on, it will be overladen, or want fit balaſt: If we are ignorant of our capacities, we ſhall either ſoar too high with a dangerous confidence, or grovel below in a ſluggiſh liſtleneſs: Studying our ſelves will help to preſerve us in a middle pitch, will direct us in a moderate courſe, wherein we may proceed with ſufficient courage and alacrity; with a prudent foreſight, or at leaſt with a comfortable hope of good ſucceſs. *De Cyri Inſtit. 7.*

7. Near to that lies another conſiderable benefit, attending this practice, which is, that it will help to render us expedite in our reſolutions, and conſtant to them; conſiſtent with our ſelves, and uniform in our proceedings; whence will ariſe both great convenience to our ſelves, and ſatisfaction to others with whom we deal or converſe: As on the contrary ſide from the neglect thereof we ſhall become ſlow in deliberation, doubtful in reſolution, and unſtable in performance. When any occaſion of acting is preſented, we ſhall be ready to cloſe with what is agreeable to our inclination, and not repugnant to our judgment, if by due ſtudy and experience we are acquainted with them; that acquaintance is a certain preparation to a ſpeedy choice; and we ſhall upon the ſame grounds conſtantly adhere to our choice, ſtanding upon ſo firm a baſe; and ſo ſhall neither diſcompoſe our ſelves, nor diſappoint others by our irreſolution and inconſtancy. But he that skills not his own heart, firſt will dwell long upon conſultation (not feeling perfectly whither his inward Bias doth draw him) and when he ſeems upon ſome ſuperficial reaſon to have determined on one ſide, ſome diſcordance to his own inclination, or ſome latent prejudice ſoon diſcovering it ſelf, he wavers, and at length falls off; finding that he hath promiſed to himſelf or others what he is unable or unwilling to perform; ſo like St. *James* his two-ſouled man, he is unſteady in all his ways. The hard Student of himſelf is like a man that hath his Eſtate *in numerato*, in ready Caſh, all in his hand, or at his command; he can preſently tell what he can do, and ſatisfie thoſe he hath to do with; go to him, you may know where to have him, even juſt where you left him, or where he uſes to be; you may expect a ſudden diſpatch, and you may rely upon his word; for he knows before-hand what he doeth, and ſhall continue to like; why he determines ſo or ſo; and cannot be removed from his well-grounded purpoſe (that which is by the Philoſopher termed *ratio nec diſſidens, nec hæſitans*, a reaſon that doth not ſtrive, nor ſtick, he is Maſter of.) But he that neglects this practice, what he hath any title to, lieth diſperſed, and laid up in corners unknown to himſelf, ſo that himſelf cannot come readily by it; you can hardly tell where to find him; you muſt wait his reſolution, and when 'tis told you, you cannot be aſſured thereof; nor any-wiſe ſatisfied that he will ſtick to his word, or his mind; he knows not throughly what he would have himſelf, can you

Jam. 1. 8.

Sen. de Vit. B. 8.

you then hope for a certain anſwer from him? He cannot well truſt himſelf, can you then relie upon him? he will find himſelf miſtaken and croſſed in his own choice, can you expect leſs? *Quid eſt ſapientia? ſemper idem velle, atque idem nolle:* Conſtancy to a Man's ſelf is, ſaith he, the very being of Wiſdom; however nothing more beſeems a Man, more commends him to ſociety, and ſuits him to buſineſs, is more pleaſant and grateful to thoſe, who have to do with him, than ſuch a clear, uniform, ſteady diſpoſition of mind; ſuch a ſmooth and even tenour of action; nothing renders converſation and commerce more unpleaſant, than a fickle lubricity of humour, and unaccountable deformity of behaviour: That ſtudy therefore is very uſeful, which conduceth to breed and maintain the one, and which removeth the other.

Sen. *Ep.* 20.

8. Again, another valuable convenience of this practice is, that it diſpoſeth unto, and preſerveth a Man's mind in a ſober temper, agreeable to his ſtate, and to the circumſtances into which he is caſt; ſuch a temper I mean as that, which the *Wiſeman* preſcribes, where he ſaith, *In the day of proſperity be joyful, but in the day of adverſity conſider.* It is apt to beget either a comfortable joy, or a wholſome regret, according as the interiour condition of his ſoul (that wherein the chief cauſe of the one, or of the other affection is grounded) doth ſeaſonably and juſtly require. To be tranſported with mirth and jollity in a ſtate of grievous miſery, when reaſon it ſelf demands ſorrow and pity; to be ſad and dumpiſh when all things flow proſperouſly, either of thoſe will ſeem marvellouſly incongruous, and argue a kind of ſtupidity in him that ſo behaves himſelf. Now there is not in truth any calamity ſo diſaſtrous as that which befals us within our ſelves, no Proſperity ſo worthily delightful as the good proceeding of affairs in our ſouls: 'Tis the moſt excellent pleaſure a Man is capable of, that which doth ſpring from the being conſcious, that his mind doth εὐοδοῦται (as St. *John* ſpeaks) that is, go well forward in a happy courſe; that good thoughts freely do ſpring up, that good inclinations are ſtrong and prevalent, that good habits of mind wax vigorous; that the love of goodneſs is improved; that he generally doth thrive in health and ſtrength ſpiritual: No increaſe of treaſure can affect the covetous, no riſing in power and dignity can ſatisfie the ambitious, no enjoyment of ſenſual entertainments can raviſh the voluptuous Man with ſo true or great content, as the ſenſible proficiency in vertuous and pious diſpoſitions of ſoul, growing *richer unto God*, and ſtronger in the hopes of his favour do produce in him that doth affect it, and can perceive it: 'Tis a joy in all reſpects incomparable; onely wiſe and reaſonable, pure and innocent, firm and durable. As on the other hand if it be ſo that we diſcern, that within our hearts bad thoughts do ſwarm and multiply, bad appetites do ſway, bad cuſtoms do encroach upon us; that deſire of, and delight in good things decay; that we become more dark, dull, unſettled in our ſpiritual apprehenſions, more feeble and languid in our proſecutions of vertue, 'tis a great benefit to have a timely remorſe prompting and urging us to endeavour a deliverance from ſo unhappy a condition: But no man can well either enjoy that comfortable delight, or be affected with this profitable ſorrow, who doth not with a careful attention view his heart, and deſcry how things go there. This conſideration mindeth of a farther and more general advantage accruing from this practice; which is this, that

Eccles 7. 14.

3 John 1. 2

9. A ſerious inſpection into our hearts doth much avail toward the reformation of our hearts and lives; curing the diſtempers, and correcting the

the vices of them. For to the curing any diſeaſe it is requiſite to know the complexion and temper of the Patient, and the part affected, and the next cauſes thereof: As the moſt grievous of bodily diſeaſes are ſeated in, or do proceed from the entrails; but not all of them from the ſame one of them; and the ſame diſeaſe depends upon the diſtemper ſometimes of one, ſometimes of another among them: So do all vices (as our *Saviour* expreſly teacheth) iſſue from the heart, or interiour man; ſome from one, ſome from another part or region thereof; and the ſame from different parts: Sometimes natural temper, ſometimes falſe opinion, ſometimes evil cuſtom is the root of the ſame kind of diſeaſe; and 'tis expedient we ſhould know diſtinctly which of them in particular caſes is the root, that accordingly we may underſtand what method of cure to uſe, whence to fetch the remedy, where to apply it; for unskilfulneſs in theſe points may fruſtrate our endeavours of amendment. If the miſchief proceed from natural inclination, we muſt not hope ever utterly to ſubdue it, nor to free our ſelves ſuddenly from the incurſions thereof; nor is bare reaſoning a proper Weapon againſt it; it being grounded in the original conſtitution of the ſoul, either immediately, or as linked to the body; which by no operation of our mind can be ſoon altered; for, *No wiſdom* (as *Seneca* ſpeaketh well) *can remove the natural vices of body or mind; what is infixed and inbred may be allayed by art, not ſubdued.* Reaſon alone, and directly is not able to grapple therewith; ſhe'll break her teeth upon ſo tough and knotty matter: It will weary her armes in vain to ſwim againſt the rapid current of natural propenſion; the violent eruptions thereof may indeed ſomewhat be reſtrained; occaſions of complying therewith may often be declined; it may in time, and by degrees, be weakned by ſubtracting the food and incentives thereof: But eſpecially Devils of this kind muſt, as our Saviour inſtructeth us, be ejected by humble, earneſt and frequent invocation of Divine aſſiſtence; without which other means commonly will prove ineffectual: But if the vice proceed onely from ill habit, or the prevalency of bad cuſtome we are to oppoſe a contrary cuſtome thereto, preſently diſuſing that practice, and acting otherwiſe, ſo ſhall we eaſily remove and extirpate it: If neither of theſe cauſes are diſcernible, we may preſume our indiſpoſition is derived from ill opinion; and that conſequently our beſt courſe of redreſſing it, is to examine the reaſon of the thing; to get clear and right apprehenſions concerning it. For example, if we obſerve our ſelves apt to be frequently tranſported with anger, let us look into our hearts, and take notice, whether the root of that diſtemper be a cholerick complexion, or whether it ariſe from an habitual indulgence to our ſelves of being moved upon ſlight cauſes, whereby a peeviſh humour is grown upon us; or whether it cometh from vain conceits of our ſelves, as of Perſons unto whom extraordinary deference and obſervance is due, ſo that no Man ſhould preſume to diſſent from our opinion, or contravene our deſire; and as we find, ſo we muſt reſpectively proceed in repreſſing the cauſes of this diſeaſe; praying, if it ariſe from nature, to the Omnipotent (the onely Lord and Commander of nature) that he would by his grace free us from that inflamable temper, and inable us to govern our paſſion; withal ſhunning occaſions of being provoked; abſtaining from ſuch diet, ſuch buſineſs, ſuch company, as naturally do kindle or ferment that humour: If the Malady grow from cuſtome, uſing our ſelves to bear patiently harſh Words, unkind dealings, croſs accidents; if our opinion diſpoſe us thereto,

Matt. 15. 18.

Nulla ſapientia naturalia corporis, aut animi vitia ponuntur: quicquid infixum & ingenitum eſt leniter arte, non vincitur. Sen. Ep. 11.

Τί φθείρει τὸ ζῷον; ἐναντίον ζῷον. Epict.

thereto, reaſoning our ſelves into moderate conceits about our ſelves, conſidering the reaſons that may acquit or excuſe others to us upon occaſion of offence: Uſing all, or ſome of theſe means, or the like, ſuch as the obſervation of our heart ſhall diſcover to us to be moſt proper and ſuitable to the nature, or to the cauſe of this diſtemper infeſting us, we ſhall wholly, or in good part rid our ſelves from it. Again, (to adjoin another example, the matter ſeeming to deſerve our heed) ſuppoſe we experience our ſelves inclining to covetouſneſs; eager in getting, ſolicitous in keeping, unwilling to part with our goods upon reaſonable occaſion (for the maintenance of our convenient reſpect in the World, or for relieving the needs of our Brethren, or for ſerving the publick, or for promoting the intereſts of Piety and Vertue) let us then look, and ſee whether this ariſeth from a natural ſtraitneſs, hardneſs, ſuſpiciouſneſs, or diffidence of Heart (ſome ſuch diſpoſitions may be obſerved in Men) or from being by our Education, or manner of life enured to ſuch a love of getting, or of ſparing, or of tenacity; or whether it ſprings from conceits about the worth, or the neceſſity of wealth (that without being furniſhed with heaps of treaſure, we ſhall come into danger of want or diſgrace; we ſhall not be able to maintain our life, or uphold our credit; we ſhall not enjoy any thing, or be any bodies among Men) let us, I ſay, by examining our Hearts find out from which of theſe ſprings this ſordid diſpoſition floweth, and accordingly ſtrive to correct it; either praying to Almighty God, that he would inlarge and ſupple our heart, if it be natural to us; or addicting our ſelves upon reaſonable occaſion to liberality and free expence, if cuſtom hath therein prevailed upon us; or, if vain ſurmiſes have ſeduced us, rectifying our judgments; as by other good diſcourſes, proper againſt that brutiſh vice, ſo eſpecially by conſidering that God is moſt good and bountiful, and tender of our being overwhelmed with need; that he continually watcheth over us, ſo that he cannot but ſee, and will regard what we want; and that he faithfully hath promiſed, if we endeavour to pleaſe him, and uſe a moderate diligence in honeſt ways to maintain our ſelves, that he will yeild his bleſſing, and never will leave us deſtitute. So in all caſes we may proceed diſcreetly in the cure of our ſpiritual, and in withſtanding the temptations to ſin, that aſſault us, if we do but ſearch into our hearts, and learn thence, whence they flow, and by what they are nouriſhed.

10. This practice farther, doth particularly ſerve to regulate our devotions, and performances more immediately ſpiritual; by ſhewing us what we need to pray for, what we are obliged to give thanks for, what it becomes us to confeſs, and deprecate, for want thereof we ſhall be apt not onely to neglect, but indecently to confound, yea miſerably to pervert theſe duties; to confound them by praying for what is already given us, is put into our hand, or lies within our reach; for which therefore we are not to pray, but to render thanks; alſo by giving thanks formally for that, which perhaps we are far from poſſeſſing, and do moſt want; ſo, I ſay, we ſhall be apt to confound and miſplace, to render vain and chimerical in a ſort our ſpiritual Addreſſes, as wanting due ground and object; yea to pervert them by asking for things really prejudicial and hurtful to us (in the circumſtances we ſtand) and thanking God for what in anger and judgment he diſpenſeth to us (ſo indeed are many appearing goods, grateful to preſent ſenſe) as alſo deprecating things moſt beneficial and uſeful, and healthful to our ſouls; neglecting to return thanks for what God diſpoſeth in mercy (ſo are many things at preſent bitter, and unſavoury

Pſal. 73. 18.
Heb. 12. 11.

unſavoury to our carnal appetite and fancy) thus from ignorance of our ſelves, and what we truly need, are we apt to pervert our devotions, not onely defeating our ſelves of the advantages they might yeild us; but (if God be not more gratious than to hearken to us, and to grant our wiſhes) bringing lamentable miſchief on our ſelves. Many examples of theſe confuſions and perverſe miſapplications of devotion both Scripture affords and experience will ſuggeſt, if we obſerve them. You know the compariſon in the *Goſpel* between the devotions of the *Phariſee* and the *Publican*, with the different acceptance they found: The one was prompt enough to give thanks for the graces he had received, and the advantages he conceived that he had in his qualities, and in his performances above others; but not having duly ſtudied himſelf; did not perceive, that he was rather bound to ask pardon for the pride of his heart, and the vanity that adhered to his performances, which rendered his thankſgiving very improper and unſeaſonable: The other being conſcious of his demerits and wants, with a manner ſutable to his condition, in Words few, but full and fit, did confeſs his unworthineſs (which to do did beſt beſeem him) and implored mercy (which was the thing he chiefly needed) ſo was his diſcreet Prayer better accepted, than the others impertinent thankſgiving: *I tell you* (ſaith our *Saviour*) *this man went down to his houſe juſtified rather than the other.* The two Sons of *Zebedee*, conceiting that our Lord would ſhortly become a great Prince, and affecting to become Favourites then, did confidently ſue for the next place of dignity about him; our Lord repreſſed their fond ambition by downright telling them firſt that *they knew not what they asked*; then by demanding of them whether they were able to undergo the trials they ſhould meet with; implying what they ſhould rather have requeſted; that they more needed humility and Patience, than Pomp and Pleaſure: And it was the ſame two Perſons, whoſe intemperate zeal he otherwhere checked with an ὐκ οἴδατε ὅιου πνεύματος, *Ye know not of what ſpirit ye are*: And no Wonder, if they who knew not what they were, did ask they knew not what; that being ignorant of their own hearts, they ſhould endite abſurd Petitions; that in ſuch a caſe they ſhould deſire things not onely incongruous and inconvenient but dangerous and deſtructive to themſelves. For to make a right diſtinction of theſe duties; to be able diſcreetly and pertinently (if I may ſo ſpeak) to converſe with God it is requiſite to look into our hearts; and from them to take fit matter, due meaſure, right ſeaſon of requeſt, and of acknowledgment reſpectively; things commonly not being as they appear to our preſent ſenſe, or to our groſs conceit, in themſelves, or in their degree good or bad; but according to the diſpoſition of our hearts, and the effects they work upon them: That is not good, which pleaſeth our ſenſe and fancy, nor that bad, which diſguſts them; but that is good, which rendereth our heart wiſer and better; which correcteth our inclinations, compoſeth our affections, informeth our judgments rightly, and purifieth our intentions; that is bad, which hath contrary effects within us. We it's likely ſhould pray with greateſt ſeriouſneſs and earneſtneſs for the removal of thoſe infirmities, for eaſe from thoſe afflictions; which we ſee the Holy *Apoſtles* (being better inſtructed in things, being more acquainted with themſelves) did rejoice, did glory in, did give thanks for; as finding the wholſome operations they had upon their hearts (that by them their vertues were exerciſed, and improved, their faith tried, their patience encreaſed, their hope confirmed; that, (to uſe the *Apoſtles* Words) they did *in the ſequele return the peaceful fruit of righteouſneſs to*

Evertere domos totas optantibus ipſis Dii faciles, &c. Juv. *Sat.* 10.

Luke 18.

Luke 18. 14.

Matt. 20. 21.

Luke 9. 55.

Jam. 1. 2. Rom. 5. 3. 2 Cor. 12. 9. Gal. 6. 14. 1 Pet. 1. 2. Heb. 12. 11.

thoſe, who were exerciſed by them; but leaving this Point, though deſerving perhaps farther conſideration, I proceed, and ſay farther, that

11. The continual viſitation of our inward parts doth not onely yeild much advantage, (as in ſome meaſure hath been ſhewed) at the long-run by influence at the ſpring-head upon the principles and cauſes of action, but doth immediately conduce to good practice, preventing and ſtifling in the very birth many ſinful and vain practices: That ſo many indiſcreet and impertinent, ſo many irregular and unſavoury, ſo many unjuſt and uncharitable ſpeeches do iſſue from our Mouths, it is eſpecially becauſe we are not then employed upon this duty; are not watching over our hearts, and obſerving thoſe inward fountains (levity and wantonneſs of thought, precipitancy and diſorder of paſſion) from whence they overflow; were we intent there, we ſhould perhaps endeavour to ſtop the current, and contain theſe inward bad motions from venting themſelves. The like we may ſay concerning many unwarrantable actions, into which we inconſiderately plunge our ſelves, not heeding, whence they ſpring: Did we regard that ſuch actions were ariſing from ambitious, covetous, froward diſpoſitions; or from certain ill-grounded prejudices lurking in our minds, we ſhould often ſurely forbear them; but while we keep none, or bad ſentinels; while in the cuſtody of our hearts we ſleep, or are drowſie; while we neglect to examine and weigh our actions what they are, and whence they come, they (although very bad and hurtful) do ſteal by us, and paſs as friends, and we hear no more of them, but in their woful conſequences. What efficacy the conſideration of God's omnipreſent eye, beholding all our doings, hath, and how all wiſe Men do preſs it as a powerful means to contain us from bad action, you cannot but well know; as likewiſe that ſome of them in order to the ſame purpoſe direct us to conceive our ſelves always under the inſpection of ſome perſon eſpecially venerable for his worth, or for his relation to us, whom we ſhould be afraid, or aſhamed to diſpleaſe: And ſurely were the faith concerning God's preſence, or the fancy concerning the preſence of a *Cato*, or a *Lælius* ſtrong enough, they could not but have great effect: However did we but live even in our own preſence, under the eye of our own judgment and conſcience; regarding not onely the matter and body, but the reaſon and ground (that is the ſoul) of our actings; even that would do much; the love and reverence of our ſelves would ſomewhat check and controll us; we ſhould fear to offend, we ſhould be aſhamed to vilify even our ſelves by fond or foul proceedings: It would (in the Philoſopher's eſteem) ſupply the room of any other Keeper or Monitor, if we could thus keep our ſelves: *If* (ſaith he) *we have ſo far profited, as to have got a reverence of our ſelves, we may then well let go a Tutour, or Pedagogue.*

Ser. *Ep.* 11, 25.

Sen. *Ep.* 25.

Cum jam profeceris tantum, ut ſit tibi etiam tui reverentia, licebit dimittas pædagogum. Ibid.

12. This practice doth much conduce to the knowledge of humane nature, and the general diſpoſitions of mankind, which is an excellent and moſt uſeful part of Wiſdom: For the principal inclinations and firſt motions of the ſoul are like in all men; whence he that by diligent ſtudy of himſelf hath obſerved them in his own ſoul, may thence collect them to be in others; he hath at leaſt a great advantage of eaſily tracing them, of ſoon deſcrying them, of clearly perceiving them in thoſe he converſeth with; the which knowledge is of great uſe, as directing us how to accommodate our ſelves in our behaviour and dealing with others.

No

No Man indeed can be a good Inſtructor or Adviſer in Moral Affairs, who hath not attained this skill, and doth not well underſtand the nature of Man: His Precepts and Rules will certainly be fallacious, or miſapplied without it: This is that, which rendered the Dictates of the *Stoicks* and other ſuch Philoſophers ſo extravagant and unpracticable, becauſe they framed them not according to the real Nature of Man, ſuch as is exiſtent in the World, but according to an *Idea* formed in their own Imaginations.

Some Caution indeed is in this Matter to be uſed, that thoſe Motions of Soul, which proceed from particular Temper and Complexion, from ſupervenient Principles or Habits, may be diſtinguiſhed from thoſe which are natural and common unto all: Which diſtinction to make is of great uſe and benefit, in order to the governing, reſtraining or correcting them.

If there be any in us, which are not obſervable in any other Men; or in other Men, which are not in us, thoſe do not ariſe from common Nature, but from the particular Diſpoſition of one or other reſpectively.

13, I add laſtly, that univerſally this Practice is requiſite and neceſſary for the well-governing of our Heart. Politicians inculcate much, that to the well-governing of a People, ſquaring fit Laws for it, and keeping it in good order, the Nature and Humour of that People ſhould be chiefly heeded and well underſtood, for that the grave *Romans*, and light *Greeks*; the ſoft *Perſians*, and ſtout *Germans*; the ſubtile *Africans*, and groſs *Scythians* would not be well managed in the ſame manner. So to govern any Man's Heart (ſince the Hearts of Men, as their Faces, and as their Voices, differ according to diverſities of Complexion, of Age, of Education, of Cuſtome and manner of living) it conduceth to know how it is diſpoſed from any of thoſe, or the like cauſes. (But how we are to guide and govern our Hearts, and what particular influence this Practice hath thereupon, I reſerve for other Meditations; when we ſhall endeavour more diſtinctly to ſhew how we may apply our thoughts to due objects; how curb and correct our inclinations; how order our paſſions; how rectify our opinions; how purify our intentions, now) I conclude with the good *Pſalmiſt*'s Requeſts to God Almighty: *Teach us thy way, O Lord, unite our hearts to fear thy name. Give us underſtanding, and we ſhall keep thy Law, yea we ſhall obſerve it with our whole heart. Search us O God, and know our hearts; try us, and know our thoughts; ſee if there be any wicked way in us, and lead us in the way everlaſting.* Amen.

Vid. Naz. *Orat.* 1.

Pſal. 86. 11.
Pſal. 119. 34.
Pſal. 139. 23.

SERMON XIV.

The Conſideration of our Latter End.

PSAL. XC. 12.

So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wiſedom.

THIS *Pſalm* is upon ſeveral peculiar accompts very remarkable; for its antiquity, in which it perhaps doth not yeild to any parcel of Scripture; for the eminency of its Authour, *Moſes* the Man of God; the greateſt of the ancient Prophets (moſt in favour, and (as it were) moſt intimate with God:) 'Tis alſo remarkable for the form and matter thereof, both affording much uſeful inſtruction. In it we have a great Prince, the Governour of a numerous People ſequeſtring his Mind from the management of publick Affairs to private Meditations; from beholding the preſent outward appearances, to conſidering the real nature and ſecret cauſes of things; In the midſt of all the Splendour and Pomp, of all the ſtir and tumult about him he obſerves the frailty of humane condition, he diſcerns the Providence of God juſtly ordering all; this he does not onely in way of wiſe conſideration, but of ſerious devotion, moulding his obſervations into pious acknowledgments, and earneſt Prayers to God; thus while he caſts one eye upon Earth viewing the occurrences there, lifting up the other to Heaven; there ſeeing God's all-governing Hand, thence ſeeking his gratious Favour and Mercy. Thus doth here that great and good Man teach us all, (more particularly Men of high Eſtate, and much Buſineſs) to find opportunities of withdrawing their thoughts from thoſe things, which commonly amuſe them (the Cares, the Glories, the Pleaſures of this World) and fixing them upon matters more improvable to devotion; the tranſitorineſs of their Condition, and their ſubjection to God's juſt Providence; joining alſo to theſe Meditations ſutable acts of Religion, due acknowledgments to God and humble Prayers. This was his practice among the greateſt encumbrances that any Man could have; and it ſhould alſo be ours. Of thoſe his devotions, addreſſed to God, the Words are part, which I have choſen for the ſubject of my meditation and preſent diſcourſe; concerning the

the meaning of which I ſhall firſt touch ſomewhat; then propound that obſervable in them, which I deſign to inſiſt upon.

The Prophet *David* hath in the 39th *Pſalm* a Prayer very near in words, and of kin (it ſeems) in ſenſe to this here; *Lord*, prays he, *Make me to know my end, and the meaſure of my days, what it is, that I may know how frail I am:* Concerning the drift of which place, as well as of this here, it were obvious to conceive, that both theſe Prophets do requeſt of God, that he would diſcover to them the definite term of their life (which by his decree he had fixed, or however by his univerſal preſcience he did diſcern; concerning which we have theſe words in *Job*, *Seeing man's days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou haſt appointed his bounds, that he cannot paſs*) we might, I ſay, at firſt hearing be apt to imagine, that their Prayer unto God is, (for the comfort of their mind burthened with afflictions, or for their better direction in the management of their remaining time of life) that God would reveal unto them the determinate length of their life. But this ſenſe, which the Words ſeem ſo naturally to hold forth is by many of the Fathers rejected; for that the knowledge of our lives determinate meaſure is not a fit matter of Prayer to God; that being a ſecret reſerved by God to himſelf, which to inquire into ſavours of preſumptuous curioſity; the univerſal validity of which reaſon I will not debate; but ſhall defer ſo much to their judgment, as to ſuppoſe that the numbring of our days (according to their ſenſe) doth here onely imply a confuſed indefinite computation of our days number, or the length of our life; ſuch as, upon which it may appear, that neceſſarily our life cannot be long (not according to the accompt mentioned in this *Pſalm* (the ſame with that of *Solon*, in *Herodotus*) above 70 or 80 Years, eſpecially as to purpoſes of health, ſtrength, content) will probably by reaſon of various accidents, to which it is expoſed, be much ſhorter (7 or 10 Years according to a moderate eſteem) may poſſibly, from ſurpriſes undiſcoverable, be very near to its period; by few inſtants removed from death (a Year, a Moneth, a Day, it may be ſomewhat leſs.) This I ſhall allow to be the *Arithmetick* that *Moſes* here deſires to learn; whence it doth follow that teaching (or making to know, ſo it is in the *Hebrew*) doth import here (as it doth otherwhere frequently in Scripture) God's affording the Grace to know practically, or with ſerious regard to conſider this ſtate and meaſure of our life (for in ſpeculation no Man can be ignorant of humane lifes brevity and uncertainty; but moſt Men are ſo negligent and ſtupid, as not to regard it ſufficiently, not to employ this knowledge to any good purpoſe) This Interpretation I chuſe, being in it ſelf plauſible enough, and countenanced by ſo good authority; yet the former might well enough (by good conſequence, if not ſo immediately) ſerve my deſign: Or be a ground able to ſupport the diſcourſe I intend to build upon the Words; the ſubject whereof briefly will be this, that the conſideration of our lives certain and neceſſary brevity and frailty, is a mean proper and apt to diſpoſe us toward the wiſe conduct of our remaining life; to which purpoſe ſuch a conſideration ſeems alike available, as the knowledge of its punctual or definite meaſure; or more than it; upon the ſame, or greater reaſons.

Pſal. 39. 4.

Job 14. 5.

Οὐ γὰρ δεῖ φρένας ἔχοντα ἀνθρώπε ἀγνοεῖν, ὅτι ἄνθρωπος ζῶον δεῖ θνητὸν, ἀλλ' ὅτι γέγονεν εἰς τὸ ἀποθανεῖν. Plut. *ad* Apoll. *p.* 202.

Quis eſt tam ſtultus, quamvis ſit adoliſcens, cui ſit exploratum ſe vel ad viſperam eſſe victurum. Cic. *de Sen.*

As for the latter clauſe, *that we may apply our hearts to wiſedom*; 'tis according to the *Hebrew*, *and we ſhall bring the heart to wiſedom*; implying, the application of our hearts to wiſedom to be conſequent upon the skill and

and practice (beſtowed by God) of thus computing our days. As for *wiſedom*, that may denote either *ſapience*, a habit of knowing what is true; or prudence, a diſpoſition of chuſing what is good; we may here underſtand both, eſpecially the latter; for, as *Tully* ſaith of Philoſophy, *Omnis ſumma Philoſophiæ ad beate vivendum refertur*, The ſum or whole of Philoſophy refers to living happily; ſo all Divine Wiſedom doth reſpect good practice. The word alſo comprehends all the conſequences and adjuncts of ſuch wiſdom (for ſo commonly ſuch words are wont by way of *metonymie* to denote, together with the things primarily ſignified, all that naturally flow from, or that uſually are conjoined with them) in brief (to ceaſe from more explaining that, which is in it ſelf conſpicuous enough) I ſo underſtand the Text, as if the Prophet had thus expreſſed himſelf: Since, O Lord, all things are in thy hand, and Sovereign diſpoſal; ſince it appears that man's life is ſo ſhort and frail, ſo vexatious and miſerable; ſo expoſed to the juſt effects of thy diſpleaſure; we humbly beſeech thee, ſo to inſtruct us by thy wiſedom, ſo to diſpoſe us by thy grace; that we may effectually know; that we may ſeriouſly conſider the brevity and uncertainty of our lives durance; whence we may be induced to underſtand, regard, and chuſe thoſe things which good reaſon dictates beſt for us; which according to true wiſedom, it moſt concerns us to know and perform. From which ſenſe of the words we might infer many uſeful documents, and draw matter of much wholſome diſcourſe; but paſſing over all the reſt, I ſhall onely inſiſt upon that one point, which I before intimated, *viz.* that the ſerious conſideration of the ſhortneſs and frailty of our life is a proper inſtrument conducible to the bringing our hearts to wiſedom, to the making us to diſcern, attend unto, embrace and proſecute ſuch things as are truly beſt for us; that it is available to the prudent conduct and management of our life; the truth of which propoſition is grounded upon the divine Prophet his opinion: He apprehended ſuch a knowledge or conſideration to be a profitable means of inducing his heart to wiſedom; wherefore he prays God to grant it him in order to that end; ſuppoſing that effect would proceed from this cauſe. And that it is ſo in way of reaſonable influence I ſhall endeavour to ſhew by ſome following reaſons.

De fin. II. p. 95.

Natura dedit uſuram vitæ, tanquam pecuniæ, nulla præſtituta die. Tuſc. quæſt. I. p. 326.

1 John 1. 17. *Love not the world*; for—— *the world paſſeth away, and the deſire thereof.*

I. The ſerious conſideration of our lifes frailty and ſhortneſs will confer to our right valuation (or eſteem) of things, and conſequently to our well-placing, and our duly moderating our cares, affections and endeavours about them. For as we value things, ſo are we uſed to affect them, to ſpend our thoughts upon them, to be earneſt in purſuance or avoiding of them. There be two ſorts of things we converſe about, good and bad; the former, according to the degree of their appearance ſo to us (that is, according to our eſtimation of them) we naturally love, delight in, deſire and purſue; the other likewiſe in proportion to our opinion concerning them, we do more or leſs loath and ſhun. Our actions therefore being all thus directed and grounded, to eſteem things aright both in kind and degree (ἐπίστῳ ἀποδίδοται τὴν ἀξίαν, to aſſign every thing its due price, as *Epictetus* ſpeaks; *quanti quidque ſit judicare*, to judge what each thing is worth as *Seneca,*) is in order the firſt, in degree a main part of wiſedom; and as ſo is frequently by wiſe men commended. Now among

Primum eſt, ut quanti quidque ſit judices; ſecundum, ut impetum ad illa capias ordinatum temperatumque; tertium, ut inter impetum tuum, actionemque conveniat, ut in omnibus iſtis tibi ipſi conſentias. Sen. Epiſt. 89.

among qualities that commend or vilifie things unto us, duration and certainty have a chief place; they often alone ſuffice to render things valuable or contemptible. Why is Gold more precious than Glaſs or Cryſtal? why prefer we a Ruby before a Roſe, or a Gilly-flower? 'tis not becauſe thoſe are more ſerviceable, more beautiful, more grateful to our ſenſes than theſe (it is plainly otherwiſe) but becauſe theſe are brittle and fading, thoſe ſolid and permanent; theſe we cannot hope to retain the uſe or pleaſure of long; thoſe we may promiſe our ſelves to enjoy ſo long as we pleaſe; whence on the other ſide is it, that we little fear or ſhun any thing how painful, how offenſive ſoever, being aſſured of its ſoon paſſing over, the biting of a flea, or the prick in letting bloud? The reaſon is evident; and that in general nothing can on either hand be conſiderable (either to value or diſeſteem) which is of a ſhort continuance. Upon this ground therefore let us tax the things concerning us whether good or bad, relating to this life, or to our future ſtate; and firſt the good things relating to this life; thence we ſhall be diſpoſed to judge truly concerning them, what their juſt price is, how much of affection, care and endeavour they deſerve to have expended on them. In general, and in the lump concerning them all St. *Paul* tells us, that τὸ σχῆμα τοῦ κόσμου παράγει, *the* ſhape or *faſhion* (all that is apparent or ſenſible) in *this preſent world doth flit, and ſoon give us the go-by*: We gaze a while upon theſe things, as *in tranſitu*, or *intra conſpectum*; as they paſs by us, and keep a-while in ſight; but they are preſently gone from us, or we from them. They are but like objects repreſented in a Glaſs; which having viewed a-while, we muſt ſhortly turn our backs, or ſhut our eyes upon them, then all vaniſhes, and diſappears unto us. Whence he well infers an indifferency of affection toward them; a ſlackneſs in the enjoyment of them to be required of us; a *uſing this world*; *as if we uſed it not*; a *buying, as if we were not to poſſeſs*; a *weeping, as if we wept not*; *and a rejoicing, as if we rejoiced not*; a kind of negligence and unconcernedneſs about theſe things. *The world* (ſaith St. *John*) *paſſeth away, and the deſire thereof*; whatever ſeemeth moſt lovely and deſirable in the World is very flitting; however our deſire and our enjoyment thereof muſt ſuddenly ceaſe. Imagine a man therefore poſſeſſed of all worldly goods, arm'd with power, flouriſhing in credit, flowing with Plenty, ſwimming in all delight (ſuch as were ſometime *Priamus*, *Polycrates*, *Cræſus*, *Pompey*) yet ſince he is withal ſuppoſed a man and mortal; ſubject both to fortune and death; none of thoſe things can he reaſonably confide, or much ſatisfy himſelf in; they may be violently divorced from him by fortune, they muſt naturally be looſed from him by death; the cloſeſt union here cannot laſt longer than till death us depart; wherefore no man upon ſuch accompt can truly call or (if he conſider well) heartily eſteem himſelf happy; a *man cannot* hence (as the moſt able judge, and truſty voucher of the commodities doth pronounce) *receive profit or content from any labour he taketh* (upon theſe tranſitory things) *under the ſun*. Why then (let me inquire) do we ſo cumber our heads with care, ſo rack our hearts with paſſion, ſo waſt our ſpirits with inceſſant toil about theſe tranſitory things? why do we ſo highly value, ſo ardently deſire, ſo eagerly purſue, ſo fondly delight in, ſo impatiently want, or loſe, ſo paſſionately contend for and emulate one another in regard to theſe bubbles; forfeiting and foregoing our homebred moſt pretious goods, tranquillity and repoſe, either of mind or body, for them? Why erect we ſuch mighty fabricks of expectation and confidence upon ſuch

1 Cor. 7. 31.

— πάντα παρέρχεται ἡμᾶς,
Εἰ δὲ μὴ, ἀλλ' αὐτοὶ πάντα παρερχόμεθα. *Gr. Epig. Anthol.*

1 John 2. 17. Ἐπιθυμία αὐτοῦ.

Eccl. 1. 3, &c.

Commorandi natura nobis diversorium dedit, non habitandi locum. Cic. *de Sen.*

such unsteady sands? why dress we up these our Inns, as if they were our homes, and are as careful about a few nights lodging here, as if we designed an everlasting aboad (we that are but *sojourners and pilgrims* here, and have *no fixed habitation* upon earth; who *come forth like a flower, and are soon cut down; flee like a shadow, and continue not; are winds passing away, and coming not again; who fade all like a leaf, whose life is a vapour appearing for a little time, and then vanishing away; whose days are a handbreadth, and age as nothing; whose days are consumed like smoak, and years are spent as a tale. Who wither like the grass,* upon which we feed; *and crumble as the dust,* of which we are compacted; for thus the Scripture by apposite comparisons represents our condition) yet we build (like the Men of *Agrigentum*) as if we were to dwell here for ever; and hoard up, as if we were to enjoy after many ages; and inquire, as if we would never have done knowing? The Citizens of *Croton* (a Town in *Italy*) had a manner (it is said) of inviting to Feasts a Year before the time, that the Guests in appetite and garb might come well prepared to them; do we not usually resemble them in this ridiculous solicitude and curiosity; *spes inchoando longas,* commencing designs, driving on projects, which a longer time than our life would not suffice to accomplish? How deeply do we concern our selves in all that is said or done; when the morrow all will be done away and forgotten? when (excepting what our duty to God, and charity towards men requires of us, and that which concerns our future eternal state) what is done in the World, who gets or loses, which of the spokes in fortune's wheel is up, and which down, is of very little consequence to us. But the more to abstract our minds from, and temper our affections about these secular matters, let us examine particularly by this standard, whether the most valued things in this World deserve that estimate which they bear in the common Market, or which popular opinion assigns them.

Rom. 2. 11. 1. Pet. 1. Heb. 13. 11. 11. 15. 1 Chron. 29. 15. Job 14. 1. Psal. 78. 39. Jam. 4. 14. Isa. 64. 6. Psal. 102. 3. 90. 5, 9. 103. 15. 39. 5. 144. 4. 119. 19. Psal. 103. 15. Isa. 40. 6.

1. To begin then with that which takes chief place, which the World most dotes on, which seems most great and eminent among men; secular state and grandeur, might and prowess, honour and reputation, favour and applause of men, all the objects of humane pride and ambition; of this kind, St. *Peter* thus pronounces; πᾶσα δόξα ἀνθρώπου, *All the glory of men is as the flower of the grass; the grass is dried up, and the flower thereof doth fall off*; 'tis as the flower of the grass, how specious soever, yet the most fading and failing part thereof; the grass it self will soon wither, and the flower doth commonly fall off before that. We cannot hold this flower of worldly glory beyond our short time of life; and we may easily much sooner be deprived of it: Many tempests of fortune may beat it down, many violent hands may crop it, 'tis apt of its self to fade upon the stalk; however the sun (the influence of age and time) will assuredly burn and dry it up, with our life that upholds it. *Surely* (saith the *Psalmist*) *men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lye*: Men of high degree; The mighty Princes, the famous Captains, the subtile Statesmen, the grave Senatours; they who turn and toss about the World at their pleasure; who, (in the *Prophet*'s language) *make the Earth tremble, and shake Kingdoms*: Even these, they are a lie; (said he, who himself was none of the least considerable among them, and by experience well knew their condition, the greatest and most glorious Man of his time King *David*.) They are a lie; that is, their state presents something of brave and admirable to the eye of Men; but 'tis only *deceptio visus*; a shew without a substance; it doth but delude the careless spectatours with false

1 Pet. 2. 24.

Psal. 62. 9.

Isa. 14. 17.

falſe appearance; it hath nothing under it ſolid or ſtable; being laid in the balance (the royal *Prophet* there ſubjoins; that is, being weighed in the ſcales of right judgment, being thoroughly conſidered) it will prove lighter than vanity it ſelf; it is leſs valuable than mere emptineſs, and nothing it ſelf; that ſaying ſounds like an *hyperbole*, but it may be true in a ſtrict ſenſe: Seeing, that the care and pains in maintaining it, the fear and jealouſie of loſing it, the envy, obloquy and danger that ſurround it, the ſnares it hath in it, and temptations inclining men to be pufft up with Pride, to be inſolent and injurious, to be corrupted with pleaſure (with other bad concomitants thereof) do more than countervail what-ever either of imaginary worth or real convenience may be in it. Perhaps could it without much care, trouble and hazard continue for ever, or for a long time, it might be thought ſomewhat conſiderable; but ſince its duration is uncertain and ſhort; ſince *man in honour abideth not, but is like the beaſts that periſh*; that they who look ſo *like Gods*, and are called ſo, and are worſhipped as ſo, *yet muſt die like men* (like men, yea *like ſheep ſhall be laid in the grave*;) Since, as 'tis ſaid of the King of *Babylon* in *Eſay*; *their pomp muſt be brought down to the grave, and the noiſe of their viols; the worm ſhall be ſpread under them, and the worm ſhall cover them*; ſeeing that a moment of time ſhall extinguiſh all their luſtre, and ſtill all that tumult about them; that they muſt be diſrobed of their Purple, and be cloathed with Corruption; that their ſo ſpatious and ſplendid Palaces muſt ſoon be exchanged for cloſe darkſome Coffins; that both their own breath, and the breath of them who now applaud them muſt be ſtopped; that they who now bow to them, may preſently trample on them; and they who to day trembled at their preſence, may the morrow ſcornfully inſult upon their memory: *Is this the man* (will they ſay, as they did of that great King) *Who made the Earth to tremble; that did ſhake Kingdoms; that made the World as a Wilderneſs; and deſtroyed the Kingdoms thereof*? Since this is the fate of the greateſt, and moſt glorious among Men, what reaſon can there be to admire their condition; to prize ſuch vain and ſhort-liv'd preeminences? For who can accompt it a great happineſs to be ſtyled and reſpected as a Prince, to enjoy all the Powers and Prerogatives of higheſt dignity for a day, or two; then being obliged to deſcend into a ſordid and deſpicable eſtate? Who values the fortune of him that is brought forth upon the Stage to act the Part of a Prince; though he be attired there, and attended as ſuch; hath all the garb and ceremony, the enſigns and appurtenances of Majeſty about him; ſpeaks and behaves himſelf imperiouſly; is flattered and worſhipped accordingly; yet, who in his heart doth adore this Idol; doth admire this mockery of greatneſs? Why not? becauſe after an hour or two the Play is over, and this Man's reign is done. And what great difference is there between this and the greateſt worldly ſtate? between *Alexander* in the Hiſtory, and *Alexander* on the Stage? Are not (in the *Pſalmiſt*'s accompt) *all our years ſpent as a tale that is told*; or, as a Fable, that is acted? This in compariſon of that, what is it at moſt, but telling the ſame ſtory, acting the ſame Part a few times over? What are a few years more than a few hours repeated not very often? not ſo often as to make any conſiderable difference; ſo a great Emperour reflected: τί διαφέρει τεθνήξεσθαι τεταχθοῖς; *what* (ſaid he) *doth the age of an infant, dying within three days, differ from that of Neſtor, who lived three ages of men*; ſince both ſhall be paſt, and ended; both then meet, and thereby become equal; ſince conſidering the immenſe time that runs on, and how little a part thereof any of us takes up (*juvenes & ſenes in*

Pſal. 82. 6.

Pſal. 49. 12, &c.

Iſa. 14. 11.

Iſa. 14. 16.

Pſal. 90.

Anton. *IV.* 50.

Sen. *Ep.* 99. 24.

æquo ſumus) we are all alike young and old; as a drop and a Pint bottle in compare to the Ocean are in a ſort equal, that is, both altogether inconſiderable. *Quid enim diu eſt, ubi finis eſt?* ſaith St. *Auſtine*: *what can be long that ſhall be ended*; which coming to that paſs is as if it never had been? Since then upon this accompt (upon worldly accompts, I ſpeak all this; and excepting that Dignity and Power may be Talents beſtowed by God, or advantages to ſerve God, and promote the good of Men; excepting alſo the relation Perſons juſtly inſtated in them bear to God as his Deputies and Miniſters; in which reſpects much reverence is due to their Perſons, much value to their Places; even the more, by how much leſs their preſent outward Eſtate is conſiderable, and becauſe at preſent they receive ſo ſlender a reward for all their cares and pains employ'd in the diſcharge of their Offices; this I enterpoſe to prevent miſtakes, leſt our diſcourſe ſhould ſeem to diſparage, or detract from the reverence due to Perſons in eminent Place. But ſince, under this caution) all worldly Power and Glory appear ſo little valuable, the conſideration hereof may avail to moderate our affections about them; to quell all ambitious deſires of them, and all vain complacencies in them. For why ſhould we ſo eagerly ſeek and purſue ſuch empty ſhadows, which if we catch, we in effect catch nothing; and whatever it is, doth preſently ſlip out of our hands? Why do we pleaſe our ſelves in ſuch evanid dreams; is it not much better to reſt quiet and content in any ſtation wherein God hath placed us, than to trouble our ſelves and others in climbing higher to a Precipice, where we can hardly ſtand upright, and whence we ſhall certainly tumble down into the grave? This conſideration is alſo a remedy, proper to remove all regret and envy grounded upon ſuch regards? For why, though ſuppoſe Men of ſmall worth, or vertue ſhould flouriſh in Honour and Power, ſhall we repine thereat? Is it not as if one ſhould envy to a Butterfly, its gaudy Wings; to a Tulip its beautiful colours, to the Graſs its pleaſant verdure; that Graſs, to which in this *Pſalm* we are compared; *which in the morning flouriſheth, and groweth up, in the evening is cut down and withereth?* I may ſay of this diſcourſe with the *Philoſopher*, ἰδιωτικὸν μὲν, ὅμως δ' ἀνυπὸν βοήθημα, 'tis a homely remedy (there may be divers better ones) yet hath its efficacy; for *David* himſelf made uſe thereof more than once: *Be not, ſaith he, afraid* (or troubled) *when one is made rich, when the glory of his houſe is encreaſed; for when he dieth he ſhall carry nothing away, his glory ſhall not deſcend with him. I was* (ſaith he again) *envious at the fooliſh, when I ſaw the proſperity of the wicked; but I went into the ſanctuary, then underſtood I their end; ſurely thou didſt ſet them in ſlippery places — how are they brought into deſolation as in a moment:* Thus conſidering the lubricity and tranſitorineſs of that Proſperity, which fooliſh and wicked Men enjoyed, did ſerve to cure that envious diſtemper, which began to affect the good man's Heart.

Nihil ne diuturnum quidem quidquam videtur, in quo eſt aliquid extremum, &c. Cic. *de Senect.*

Pſal. 90. 6.

Ant. *IV.* §50.

Pſal. 49. 16. 73. 17. 37. 1.

Prov. 23. 17.

2. But let us deſcend from Dignity and Power (that is from names and ſhews) to ſomewhat ſeeming more real and ſubſtantial; to Riches; that great and general Idol, the moſt devoutly adored that ever any hath been in the World; which hath a Temple almoſt in every Houſe, an Altar in every Heart; to the gaining of which moſt of the thoughts, moſt of the labours of Men immediately tend; in the Poſſeſſion of which Men commonly deem the greateſt Happineſs doth conſiſt. But this conſideration we diſcourſe about, will eaſily diſcover, that even this, as all other Idols, is *nothing in the World*, nothing true and ſolid; Will (I ſay) juſtify that advice

1 Cor. 8. 4.

advice and verifie that aſſertion of the *Wiſe-man*: *Labour not for riches; wilt thou ſet thy heart upon that which is not*? it well applied will pluck down the high Places reared to this great Idol of Clay in Mens Hearts; will confute the common Conceits and Phraſes, which ſo beautifie Wealth; ſhewing that whoever dotes thereon is more truly and properly ſtyled a miſerable Man, than a happy, or bleſſed one: For is he not indeed miſerable, who *makes lies his refuge*, who confides in that which will deceive and diſappoint him? The *Prophet* aſſures us ſo: *Woe* (ſaith the Prophet *Habbakuk*) *woe be to him, who coveteth an evil covetouſneſs to his houſe; that he may ſet his neſt on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil:* Men (he implies) imagine by getting Riches, they have ſecured and raiſed themſelves above the reach of all miſchief: But ye ſee it was in the *Prophet*'s judgment a woful miſtake. St. *Paul* doth warn Men (very emphatically) *not to hope ἐπὶ πλούτου ἀδηλότητι, in the uncertainty* (or obſcurity) *of riches*; intimating, that to truſt in them, is to truſt in darkneſs it ſelf; in that wherein we can diſcern nothing; in we know not what? They are, we cannot but obſerve, ſubject to an infinity of chances, many of them obvious and notorious; more of them ſecret and unaccomptable: *They make* (the *Wiſeman* tells us) *themſelves wings* (they need it ſeems no help for that) *and fly away like as an eagle toward heaven* (quite out of ſight, and beyond our reach they of their own accord do ſwiftly fly away) however, ſhould they be diſpoſed to ſtay with us, we muſt fly from them; were they inſeparably affixed to this life, yet muſt they together with that be ſevered from us; as we came naked of them into this World, ſo naked ſhall we return: *As he came*, ſaith the *Preacher*, *ſo ſhall he go*; *and what profit* (then) *hath he that laboureth for the wind*? From hence, that we muſt ſo ſoon part with riches, he infers them to be but wind; a thing not any-wiſe to be fixed or ſettled; which 'tis vain to think we can appropriate, or retain; and vain therefore greedily to covet, or purſue: So the *Pſalmiſt* alſo reaſons it: *Surely, every man* (ſaith he) *walketh in a vain ſhew; ſurely they are diſquieted in vain; he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who ſhall gather them.* Men, in his accompt, that troubled themſelves in accumulating Wealth, did but idly delude themſelves, fanſying to receive content from ſuch things, which they muſt themſelves ſoon be ſeparated from; and leave at uncertainties, to be diſpoſed of they know not how: That which in his wiſe Son's eſteem was ſufficient to make *a man hate all his labour under the ſun*: *Becauſe*, ſaith he, *I ſhall leave it to the man that ſhall be after me, and who knoweth, whether he ſhall be a wiſe man or a fool? yet he ſhall have rule over all my labour, wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have ſhewed my ſelf wiſe under the ſun:* All, it ſeems, that we are ſo wiſe, and ſo induſtrious about; that we ſo beat our heads about, and ſpend our ſpirits upon, is at moſt but *gaudium hæredis*; *the joy of an heir*, and that an uncertain one (for your Son, your Kinſman, your Friend may for all you can know dye before you, or ſoon after you) 'tis but a being at great pains and charges in tilling the Land, and ſowing and dreſſing it; whence we are ſure not to reap any benefit to our ſelves, and cannot know who ſhall do it.

Prov. 23. 5.

Ὄλβιος, *Beatus. &c. pro divitis.*

Hab. 2. 9.

1 Tim. 6. 19.

Prov. 23. 5.

Job 1. 21. 27. 19. 1 Tim. 6. 7. Eccl. 5. 21.

Pſal. 39. 6.

Eccl. 2. 18.

In his elaborant, quæ ſciunt nihil omnino ad ſe pertinere; ſerunt arbores, quæ alteri ſeculo proſint. Cic. *de Senect.*

The rich man (St. *James* tells us) *as the flower of the graſs ſhall he paſs away; for the ſun is no ſooner riſen with a burning heat, but it withereth the graſs, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the faſhion thereof periſheth*; *So alſo ſhall the rich man fade in his ways*; all the comfort (we ſee by the *Apoſtles* diſcourſe) and the convenience, all the grace and ornament

Jam. 1. 11.

ornament that riches are supposed to yeild will certainly wither and decay, either before, or with us; whenever the sun (that is, either some extream mischance in life, or the certain destiny of death) doth arise, and make impression on them. But our *Saviour* hath best set out the nature and condition of these things in that *Parable* concerning the man, who having had a plentiful crop of Corn, and having projected for the disposal of it, resolved then *to bless himself*, and entertain his mind with pleasing discourses, that having, in readiness and security, so copious accommodations, he might now enjoy himself with full satisfaction and delight; not considering, that though his Barns were full, his life was not sure; that God's Pleasure might soon interrupt his Pass-time; that the fearful sentence might presently be pronounced: *Thou fool, this night thy life shall be required of thee, and what thou hast prepared, to whom shall it fall?* *Euripides* calls riches φιλόψυχον χρῆμα, *a thing which much endears life*; or makes men greatly love it; but they do not at all enable to keep it: There is no ἀντάλλαγμα τῆς ψυχῆς, *no* price, or *ransome equivalent to life*; *all that a man hath, he would give* to redeem it, but it is a Purchase too dear for all the riches in the World to compass; so the *Psalmist* tells us, *They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches, none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransome for him; for the redemption of their soul is precious*: They cannot redeem their Brother's soul, or life; nor therefore their own; for all souls are of the same value, all greatly surpass the price of gold and silver. Life was not given us for perpetuity, but lent, or deposited with us; And without delay or evasion it must be resigned into the hand of its just Owner, when he shall please to demand it; and although righteousness may, *yet riches* (as the *Wiseman* tells us) *cannot deliver from death, nor at all profit us in the day of wrath.* Could we probably retain our Possessions for ever in our hands; nay, could we certainly foresee some considerable long definite time, in which we might enjoy our stores, it were perhaps somewhat excusable to scrape and hoard, it might look like rational Providence, it might yeild some valuable satisfaction; but since, *Rape, congere, aufer, possside, statim relinquendum est*; since, as *Solomon* tells us, *Riches are not for ever, nor doth the crown endure to every generation*; yea, since they must be left very soon, nor is there any certainty of keeping them any time; that one day may consume them; one night may dispossess us of them; and our life together with them, there can be no reason why we should be solicitous about them; no accompt given of our setting so high a rate upon them. For who would much regard the having custody of a rich treasure for a day or two, then to be stripped of all, and left bare? To be to day invested in large demains, and to morrow to be dispossessed of them? No Man surely would be so fond, as much to affect the condition. Yet this is our case; whatever we call ours, we are but guardians thereof for a few days. This consideration therefore may serve to repress, or moderate in us all covetous desires, proud conceits, vain confidences and satisfactions in respect to worldly Wealth, to induce us (in *Job*'s language) *not to make gold our hope, nor to say to the fine gold, thou art my confidence; not to rejoyce because our wealth is great, and because our hand hath gotten much*; to extirpate from our hearts that root of all evil, the love of Money. For if, as the *Preacher* thought, the greatest pleasure or benefit accruing from them, is but looking upon them for a while, (*what good*, saith he, *is there to the owners thereof, saving the beholding of them with their eyes?*) if a little will, nay must suffice our natural appetites, and our present necessi-

Luke 12. 20.

Τίνι ἔχει.

Psal. 49.

Luke 12. 20.

Prov. 11. 4.

Prov. 27. 24.

Sen. *Ep.* 98.

Job 31. 24.

Eccl. 5. 11.

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ties; if more than needs, is but (as the Scripture teaches us) *a trouble* diſquieting our minds with care; *a* dangerous *ſnare*, drawing us into miſchief and ſorrow; if this, I ſay, be their preſent quality; and were it better, yet could it laſt for any certain, or any long continuance, is it not evidently better to enjoy that pittance God hath allotted us with eaſe and contentation of mind; or if we want a neceſſary ſupply, to employ only a moderate diligence in getting thereof by the faireſt means, which with God's bleſſing promiſed thereto, will never fail to procure a competence, and with this to reſt content; than with thoſe in *Amos*, *to pant after the duſt of the earth*; *to lade our ſelves with thick clay*; to thirſt inſatiably after flouds of gold, to heap up mountains of treaſure, to extend unmeaſurably our poſſeſſions, (*joining houſe to houſe, and laying field to field, till there be no place, that we may be placed alone in the midſt of the earth*; as the Prophet *Eſay* doth excellently deſcribe the covetous Man's humour) than, I ſay, thus inceſſantly to toil for the maintenance of this frail body, this flitting breath of ours? If Divine Bounty hath freely imparted a plentiful eſtate upon us, we ſhould indeed bleſs God for it; *making our ſelves friends* thereby (as our *Saviour* adviſes us) employing it to God's Praiſe and Service; to the relief and comfort of our Brethren that need; but to ſeek it earneſtly, to ſet our heart upon it, to relye thereon; to be greatly pleaſed or elevated in mind thereby, as it argues much infidelity and profaneneſs of heart, ſo it ſignifies much inconſiderateneſs and folly, the ignorance of its nature, the forgetfulneſs of our own condition, upon the grounds diſcourſed upon.

Eccl. 5. 12. 1 Tim. 6. 9.

Simplici curâ conſtant neceſſaria, in deliciis laboratur Sen. *Ep.* 89.

Matt. 6. Heb. 13. 5. 1 Tim. 6. 8. Pſal. 55. 23. Amos 2. 6. Hab. 2. 6. Iſa. 5. 8.

Luke 16. 9.

3. Now, in the next place; for Pleaſure, that great Witch, which ſo enchants the World, and which by its miſchievous Baits ſo allures Mankind into ſin and miſery; although this conſideration be not altogether neceſſary to diſparage it (its own nature ſufficing to that; for it is more tranſitory than the ſhorteſt life, it dyes in the very enjoyment) yet it may conduce to our wiſe and good practice in reſpect thereto, by tempering the ſweetneſs thereof, yea ſouring its reliſh to us; minding us of its inſufficiency and unſerviceableneſs to the felicity of a mortal creature; yea, its extreamly dangerous conſequences to a ſoul, that muſt ſurvive the ſhort enjoyment thereof. Some Perſons indeed, ignorant or incredulous of a future eſtate; preſuming of no ſenſe remaining after death, nor regarding any accompt to be rendred of this life's actions, have encouraged themſelves, and others in the free enjoyment of preſent ſenſualities, upon the ſcore of our life's ſhortneſs and uncertainty; inculcating ſuch *Maxims* as theſe:

——*Brevis eſt hic fructus homullis*; Lucr.

——*poſt mortem nulla voluptas.*

Quem fors dierum cunque dabit, lucro Appone, nec dulces amores Sperne puer, &c. Hor. I. 9.

Let us eat and drink for to morrow we ſhall dye; becauſe our life is ſhort, let us make the moſt advantageous uſe thereof we can; becauſe death is uncertain, let us prevent its ſurpriſal, and be beforehand with it, enjoying ſomewhat, before it ſnatches all from us. The Authour of *Wiſedom* obſerveth, and thus repreſents theſe Mens diſcourſe: *Our life is ſhort and tedious*; *and in the death of a man there is no remedy*; *neither was there any man known to have returned from the grave*: —— *Come on, therefore let us enjoy the good things that are preſent*; *let us ſpeedily uſe the creatures like as in youth*; *Let us fill our ſelves with coſtly wine and ointments*; *and let no flower of the ſpring paſs by us, let us crown our ſelves with roſe-buds before they be withered*; *let none of us go without his part of voluptuouſneſs* —— *for this is our portion, and our lot*

1 Cor. 15. 32.

Sap. 2. 1, &c.

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is this. Thus, and no wonder, have ſome men conceiving themſelves beaſts, reſolved to live as ſuch; renouncing all ſober care becoming men, and drowning their reaſon in brutiſh ſenſualities; yet no queſtion, the very ſame reflexion, that this life would ſoon paſs away, and that death might ſpeedily attack them, did not a little quaſh their mirth, and damp their pleaſure. To think, that this perhaps might be the laſt Banquet they ſhould taſt of; that they ſhould themſelves ſhortly become the feaſt of Worms and Serpents; could not but ſomewhat ſpoil the guſt of their higheſt delicacies, and diſturb the ſport of their loudeſt jovialties; but, in *Job*'s expreſſion, *make the meat in their bowels to turn, and be as the gall of Aſps within them.* Thoſe cuſtomary enjoyments did ſo enamour them of ſenſual delight, that they could not without pungent regret imagine a neceſſity of ſoon for ever parting with them; and ſo their very Pleaſure was by this thought made diſtaſtful and embittered to them. So did the *Wiſeman* obſerve: *O death, how bitter is the remembrance of thee to a man that liveth at reſt in his poſſeſſions; unto the man that hath nothing to vex him; and that hath proſperity in all things; Ye* (adds he) *unto him, that is yet able to receive meat*: And how bitter then muſt the remembrance thereof be to him, who walloweth in all kind of corporal ſatisfaction and delight; that placeth all his happineſs in ſenſual enjoyment? However, as to us, who are better inſtructed and affected; who know and believe a future ſtate; the conſideration, that the time of enjoying theſe delights will ſoon be over; that this World's jollity is but like *the crackling of thorns under a pot* (which yeilds a brisk ſound, and a chearful blaze, but heats little, and inſtantly paſſes away) that they leave no good fruits behind them, but do onely corrupt and enervate our minds; war againſt, and hurt our ſouls; tempt us to ſin, and involve us in guilt; that therefore *Solomon* was ſurely in the right, when he ſaid of *laughter*, that *it is mad, and of mirth, what doeth it?* (that is, that the higheſt of theſe delights are very irrational impertinences) and of intemperance; that, at the laſt, *it biteth like a Serpent, and ſtingeth like an Adder*; with us, I ſay, who reflect thus, that *(πρόσκαιρος ἁμαρτίας ἀπόλαυσις) enjoyment of ſinful pleaſure for a ſeaſon cannot* obtain much eſteem and love; but will rather, I hope, be deſpiſed and abhorred by us. I will add onely

Job 20. 14.

Eccles 41. 1.

Eccles. 7. 6.

Eccl. 2. 2.

Prov. 23. 32.

Heb. 11. 25.

4. Concerning ſecular Wiſedom and Knowledge; the which Men do alſo commonly with great earneſtneſs and ambition ſeek after, as the moſt ſpecious ornament, and pure content of their mind; this conſideration doth alſo detect the juſt value thereof; ſo as to allay intemperate ardour toward it, pride and conceitedneſs upon the having or ſeeming to have it, envy and emulation about it. For, imagine, if you pleaſe, a Man accompliſhed with all varieties of learning commendable, able to recompt all the ſtories, that have been ever written (or the deeds acted) ſince the World's beginning; to underſtand, or with the moſt delightful fluency and elegancy to ſpeak all the languages, that have at any time been in uſe among the ſons of men; skilful in twiſting and untwiſting all kinds of ſubtilties; verſed in all ſorts of natural experiments, and ready to aſſign plauſible conjectures about the cauſes of them; ſtudied in all Books whatever, and in all Monuments of Antiquity; deeply knowing in all the myſteries of art, or ſcience, or policy, ſuch as have ever been deviſed by humane wit, or ſtudy or obſervation; yet all this, ſuch is the pity, he muſt be forced preſently to abandon; all the uſe he could make of all his notions, the pleaſure he might find in them, the reputation accruing

Δοκεῖ γὰρ ἡ σοφία θαυμαστὰς ἡδονὰς ἔχειν καθαρειότητι, καὶ τῷ βεβαίῳ. Arist. Eth. X. 7.

cruing to him from them muſt at that fatal minute vaniſh; *his breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth, in that very day his thoughts periſh. There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wiſedom in the grave, whither he goeth.* 'Tis ſeen (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*, ſeen indeed every day, and obſerved by all) *that wiſe men dye; likewiſe the fool and brutiſh perſon periſheth; one event happeneth to them both; there is no remembrance of the wiſe more than of the fool for ever*; (both dye alike, both alike are forgotten) as the wiſeſt man himſelf, did (not without ſome diſtaſt) obſerve and complain. All our ſubtile conceits, and nice criticiſms; all our fine inventions and goodly ſpeculations ſhall be ſwallowed up either in the utter darkneſs, or in the clearer light of the future ſtate. One Potion of that *Lethean* cup (which we muſt all take down upon our entrance into that *Land of forgetfulneſs*) will probably drown the memory, deface the ſhape of all thoſe *Ideas*, with which we have here ſtuffed our minds; however they are not like to be of uſe to us in that new, ſo different, ſtate; where none of our languages are ſpoken; none of our experience will ſute; where all things have quite another face unknown, unthought of by us. Where *Ariſtotle*, and *Varro* ſhall appear mere Idiots; *Demoſthenes* and *Cicero* ſhall become very infants; the wiſeſt and eloquenteſt *Greeks* will prove ſenſeleſs and dumb *Barbarians*; where all our Authours ſhall have no authority; where we muſt all go freſh to ſchool again; muſt unlearn perhaps, what in theſe miſty regions we thought our ſelves beſt to know; and begin to learn, what we not once ever dream'd of; Doth therefore, I pray you, ſo tranſitory and fruitleſs a good (for it ſelf I mean and excepting our duty to God, or the reaſonable diligence we are bound to uſe in our calling) deſerve ſuch anxious deſire; or ſo reſtleſs toil; ſo careful attention of mind, or aſſiduous pain of body about it? Doth it become us to contend, or emulate ſo much about it? Above all do we not moſt unreaſonably, and againſt the nature of the thing it ſelf we pretend to (that is ignorantly and fooliſhly) if we are proud and conceited, much value our ſelves or contemn others, in reſpect thereto? *Solomon* the moſt experienced in this matter, and beſt able to judge thereof (He that gave his heart to ſeek and ſearch out by wiſdom concerning all things, that had been done under Heaven, and this with extream ſucceſs; even he) paſſeth the ſame ſentence of vanity, vexation and unprofitableneſs, upon this, as upon all other ſubceleſtial things. True, he commends wiſedom as an excellent and uſeful thing comparatively; *exceeding folly, ſo far as light exceedeth darkneſs*; But ſince light it ſelf is not permanent, but muſt give way to darkneſs; the difference ſoon vaniſhed; and his opinion thereof abated; conſidering, that as it happened to the fool, ſo it happened to him, he breaks into that expoſtulation: *And why then was I more wiſe?* to what purpoſe was ſuch a diſtinction made, that ſignified in effect ſo little? And indeed the Teſtimony of this great perſonage may ſerve for a good *Epilogue* to all this diſcourſe, diſcovering ſufficiently the ſlender worth of all earthly things: Seeing he, that had given himſelf induſtriouſly to experiment the worth of all things here below, to ſound the depth of their utmoſt perfection and uſe; who had all the advantages imaginable of performing it; Who flouriſhed in the greateſt magnificences of worldly pomp and power; who enjoyed an incredible affluence of all riches; who taſted all varieties of moſt exquiſite pleaſure; whoſe heart was (by God's ſpecial gift, and by his own induſtrious care) enlarged with all kind of knowledge (furniſhed with

Pſal. 46. 4. Eccl. 9. 10.

Pſal. 49. 10. Eccl. 2. 14, 15, &c.

Pſal. 88. 12.

Τῷ δ' Ἰσοκράτης διατείθῳ ὅτι σκώπτων, ἔφη φάναι πρὸς αὐτὸν τοὺς μαθητὰς, ὡς ἐν ᾅδου χρησομένους τοῖς τέχναις, καὶ δίκας ἐρήσοντας. Cato Sen. *apud* Plut. *pag.* 641.

Διπλῆν ὁρῶσιν οἱ μανθάνοντες γράμματα. Eccl. 2. 15.

1 Kings 4. 29. with notions many *as the Sand upon the Sea ſhore*) above all that were before him; who had poſſeſſed and enjoyed all that fancy could conceive, or heart could wiſh, and had arrived to the top of ſecular Happineſs; Yet even *He* with pathetical reiteration pronounces all to be *vanity and vexation of ſpirit*; altogether unprofitable and unſatisfactory to the mind of Man. And ſo therefore we may juſtly conclude them to be; ſo finiſhing the firſt grand advantage this preſent conſideration affordeth us in order to that wiſedom, to which we ſhould apply our hearts.

I ſhould proceed to gather other good fruits, which it is apt to produce and contribute to the ſame purpoſe; but ſince my thoughts have taken ſo large ſcope upon that former head, ſo that I have already too much, I fear, exerciſed your patience, I ſhall only mention the reſt. As this conſideration doth, as we have ſeen, Firſt, diſpoſe us rightly to value theſe temporal goods, and moderate our affections about them; ſo it doth, Secondly, in like manner, conduce to the right eſtimation of temporal evils; and thereby to the well tempering our paſſions in the reſentment of them; to the begetting of patience and contentedneſs in our minds. Alſo, Thirdly, it may help us to value, and excite us to regard thoſe things (good or evil) which relate to our future ſtate; being the things only of a permanent nature, and of an everlaſting conſequence to us. Fourthly, It will engage us to husband carefully and well employ this ſhort time of our preſent life: Not to defer or procraſtinate our endeavours to live well; not to be lazy and loitering in the diſpatch of our only conſiderable buſineſs, relating to eternity; to embrace all opportunities, and improve all means; and follow the beſt *compendiums* of good practice leading to eternal bliſs. Fifthly, It will be apt to confer much toward the begetting and preſerving ſincerity in our thoughts, words and actions; cauſing us to decline all oblique deſigns upon preſent mean intereſts, or baſe regards to the opinions or affections of men; bearing ſingle reſpects to our conſcience and duty in our actions; Teaching us to ſpeak as we mean; and be what we would ſeem; to be in our hearts and in our cloſets, what we appear in our outward expreſſions and converſations with Men; For conſidering, that within a very ſhort time all the thoughts of our hearts ſhall be diſcloſed; and all the actions of our lives expoſed to publick view (being ſtrictly to be examined at the great bar of divine judgment before Angels and Men) we cannot but perceive it to be the greateſt folly in the World, for this ſhort preſent time to diſguiſe our ſelves; to conceal our intentions, or ſmother our actions. What hath occurred (upon theſe important ſubjects) to my meditation, I muſt at preſent, in regard to your patience, omit. I ſhall cloſe all with that good *Collect* of our Church.

Almighty God, give us grace, that we may caſt away the works of darkneſs, and put upon us the armour of light now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy Son Jeſus Chriſt came to viſit us in great humility; that in the laſt day, when he ſhall come again in his glorious Majeſty to judge both the quick and the dead, we may riſe to the life immortal, through him, who liveth and reigneth with thee, and the Holy Ghoſt; now and ever. Amen.

SER-

SERMON XV.

The Conſideration of our Latter End.

PSAL. XC. 12.

So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wiſedom.

IN diſcourſing formerly upon theſe words (expounded according to the moſt common and paſſable interpretation) that which I chiefly obſerved was this: That the ſerious conſideration of the ſhortneſs and frailty of our life is a fit mean or rational inſtrument ſubſervient to the bringing our hearts to wiſedom; that is, to the making us diſcern, attend unto, embrace, and proſecute ſuch things, as according to the dictates of right reaſon are truly beſt for us.

Job 14. 14. *All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.*

I. The truth of which obſervation I largely declared from hence, that the ſaid conſideration diſpoſeth us to judge rightly about thoſe goods (which ordinarily court and tempt us, *viz.* worldly glory and honour; riches, pleaſure, knowledge; to which I might have added wit, ſtrength and beauty) what their juſt worth and value is; and conſequently to moderate our affections, our cares, our endeavours about them; for that if all thoſe goods be uncertain and tranſitory, there can be no great reaſon to prize them much, or to affect them vehemently, or to ſpend much care and pain about them.

II. I ſhall next in the ſame ſcales weigh our temporal evils; and ſay, that alſo, The conſideration of our lives brevity and frailty doth avail to the paſſing a true judgment of, and conſequently to the governing our paſſions, and ordering our behaviour in reſpect to all thoſe temporal evils, which either according to the Law of our nature, or the fortuitous courſe of things, or the particular diſpenſation of providence do befal us. Upon the declaration of which point I need not inſiſt much, ſince what was before diſcourſed concerning the oppoſite goods doth plainly enough infer it; more immediately indeed in regard to the *mala damni*, or *privationis* (the evils, which conſiſt onely in the want, or loſs of temporal goods) but ſufficiently alſo by a manifeſt parity of reaſon in reſpect to the *mala ſenſus*, the real pains, croſſes and inconveniences, that aſſail us in this life. For if worldly glory do hence appear to be no more than a tranſient blaze, a fading ſhew, a hollow ſound, a piece of theatrical pageantry,

the want thereof cannot be very conſiderable to us. Obſcurity of condition (living in a valley beneath that dangerous height, and deceitful luſtre) cannot in reaſon be deemed a very ſad or pitiful thing; which ſhould diſpleaſe, or diſcompoſe us; if we may thence learn that abundant wealth is rather a needleſs clog, or a perillous ſnare, than any great convenience to us; we cannot well eſteem to be poor a great infelicity, or to undergo loſſes a grievous calamity; but rather a benefit to be free from the diſtractions that attend it; to have little to keep for others, little to care for our ſelves. If theſe preſent pleaſures be diſcerned hence to be only wild fugitive dreams; out of which being ſoon rouſed we ſhall only find bitter regrets to abide; why ſhould not the wanting opportunities of enjoying them be rather accompted a happy advantage, than any part of miſery to us? If it ſeem, that the greateſt perfection of curious knowledge (of what uſe or ornament ſoever) after it is hardly purchaſed, muſt ſoon be parted with; to be ſimple or ignorant will be no great matter of lamentation: as thoſe will appear no ſolid goods, ſo theſe conſequently muſt be
Sen. *Ep.* 89. onely *umbræ malorum*, phantaſms, or ſhadows of evil, rather than truly or ſubſtantially ſo; (evils created by fancy and ſubſiſting thereby; which reaſon ſhould, and time will ſurely remove.) That in being impatient or diſconſolate for them, we are but like children, that fret and wail for the want of petty toys. And for the more real or poſitive evils ſuch as violently aſſault nature, whoſe impreſſions no reaſon can ſo withſtand, as to diſtinguiſh all diſtaſt or afflictive ſenſe of them; yet this conſideration will aid to abate and aſſwage them; affording a certain hope and proſpect of approaching redreſs. It is often ſeen at Sea, that Men (from unacquaintance with ſuch agitations, or from brackiſh ſteams ariſing from the ſalt Water) are heartily ſick, and diſcover themſelves to be ſo by apparently grievous ſymptomes; yet no man hardly there doth mind or pity them, becauſe the malady is not ſuppoſed dangerous, and within a while will probably of it ſelf paſs over; or that however, the remedy is not far off; the ſight of Land, a taſt of the freſh air will relieve them: 'Tis near our Caſe: We paſſing over this troubleſome Sea of life; from unexperience, joined with the tenderneſs of our conſtitution, we cannot well endure the changes and croſſes of fortune; to be toſs'd up and down; to ſuck in the ſharp vapours of penury, diſgrace, ſickneſs, and the like, doth beget a qualm in our ſtomachs; make us nauſeate all things, and appear ſorely diſtempered; yet is not our condition ſo diſmal, as it ſeems; we may grow hardier, and wear out our ſenſe of affliction; however, the Land is not far off, and by diſembarking hence we ſhall ſuddenly be diſcharged of all our moleſtations. 'Tis a common ſolace of grief, approved by wiſe men, *ſi gravis, brevis eſt; ſi longus, levis*; if it be very grievous and acute, it cannot continue long, without intermiſſion or reſpit; if it abide long, it is ſupportable; intolerable pain is like lightening, it deſtroys us, or is it ſelf inſtantly deſtroyed. However, death at length (which never is far off) will free us; be we never ſo much toſſed with ſtorms of misfortune, that is a ſure haven; be we perſecuted with never ſo many enemies, that is a ſafe refuge; let what pains or diſeaſes ſoever infeſt us, that is an aſſured *Anodynon*, and infallible remedy for them all; however we be wearied with the labours of the day, the night will come and eaſe us; the grave will become a bed of reſt unto us.

Θάρσει· πόνε γὰρ ἄκεσιν οὐκ ἔχει χρόνον.

Τὸ μὲν ἀφόρητον ἐξάγει· τὸ δ' ὃ χρονίζον φορητόν. Ant. *VII. Sect.* 33.

Summi doloris intentio invenit finem: nemo poteſt valde dolere, & diu: ſic nos amantiſſima noſtri natura diſpoſuit, ut dolorem aut tolerabilem, aut brevem faceret. Sen. *Ep.* 24.

Dolore perculſi mortem imploramus, eamque unam, ut miſeriarum malorumque terminum, exoptamus. Cic. *conſ.*

Moriar? hoc dicis; deſinam ægrotare poſſe, &c. Sen.

us. Shall I dye? I ſhall then ceaſe to be ſick; I ſhall be exempted from diſgrace; I ſhall be enlarged from priſon; I ſhall be no more pinched with want; no more tormented with pain. Death is a Winter, that as it withers the Roſe and Lily, ſo it kills the Nettle and Thiſtle; as it ſtifles all worldly joy and pleaſure, ſo it ſuppreſſes all care and grief; as it huſhes the voice of mirth and melody, ſo it ſtills the clamours, and the ſighs of miſery; as it defaces all the World's glory, ſo it covers all diſgrace, wipes off all tears, ſilences all complaint, buries all diſquiet and diſcontent. King *Philip* of *Macedon* once threatened the *Spartans* to vex them ſorely, and bring them into great ſtraits; but, anſwered they, *can he hinder us from dying*; that indeed is a way of evading, which no enemy can obſtruct, no Tyrant can debar Men from; they who can deprive of life, and its conveniences, cannot take away death from them. There is a place, *Job* tells us, *where the wicked ceaſe from troubling, and where the weary be at reſt; where the priſoners reſt together; they hear not the voice of the oppreſſour; the ſmall and great are there; and the ſervant is free from his Maſter.* 'Tis therefore but holding out a while, and a deliverance from the worſt this World can moleſt us with, ſhall of its own accord arrive unto us; in the mean time 'tis better that we at preſent owe the benefit of our comfort to reaſon, than afterward to time; by rational conſideration to work patience and contentment in our ſelves; and to uſe the ſhortneſs of our life as an argument to ſuſtain us in our affliction, than to find the end thereof onely a natural and neceſſary means of our reſcue from it. The contemplation of this cannot fail to yeild ſomething of courage and ſolace to us in the greateſt preſſures; theſe tranſient, and ſhort-liv'd evils, if we conſider them as ſo, cannot appear ſuch horrid bugbears, as much to affright or diſmay us; if we remember how ſhort they are, we cannot eſteem them ſo great, or ſo intolerable. There be, I muſt confeſs, divers more noble conſiderations, proper and available to cure diſcontent and impatience. The conſidering, that all theſe evils proceed from God's juſt will, and wiſe providence; unto which it is fit, and we upon all accompts are obliged readily to ſubmit; that they do ordinarily come from God's goodneſs, and gratious deſign toward us; that they are medicines (although ungrateful, yet wholſome) adminiſtred by the Divine Wiſdom to prevent, remove or abate our diſtempers of ſoul (to allay the tumours of pride, to cool the fevers of intemperate deſire; to rouſe us from the lethargy of ſloath; to ſtop the gangrene of bad conſcience) that they are fatherly corrections intended to reclaim us from ſin, and excite us to duty; that they ſerve as inſtruments or occaſions to exerciſe, to try, to refine our vertue; to beget in us the hope, to qualify us for the reception of better rewards; ſuch diſcourſes indeed are of a better nature, and have a more excellent kind of efficacy; yet no fit help, no good art, no juſt weapon is to be quite neglected in the combat againſt our ſpiritual foes. A Pebble-ſtone hath been ſometimes found more convenient than a Sword or a Spear to ſlay a Giant. Baſer remedies (by reaſon of the Patient's conſtitution, or circumſtances) do ſometime produce good effect, when others in their own nature more rich and potent want efficacy. And ſurely frequent reflexions upon our mortality, and living under the ſenſe of our lifes frailty cannot but conduce ſomewhat to the begetting in us an indifferency of mind toward all theſe temporal occurrents; to extenuate both the goods and the evils we here meet with; conſequently therefore to compoſe and calm our paſſions about them.

Ἄλλω ἔχειν βουλὸν, ἐ τρέμω σκιάς. *Eripere vitam nemo non homini poteſt; At nemo mortem.* Sen. *Trag.* Job 3. 17.

Ὁ μέλλεις πᾶ χρόνῳ χαλεζεαδς, τᾶτο χαλεζεαδς πᾶ λίγῳ Plut. *ad* Apol. *p.* 195.

Omnia brevia tolerabilia eſſe debent, etiamſi magna. Cic. Læl. *ad fin.*

III. But I proceed to another uſe of that conſideration we ſpeak of emergent from the former, but ſo as to improve it to higher purpoſes. For ſince it is uſeful to the diminiſhing our admiration of theſe worldly things, to the withdrawing our affections from them, to the ſlackning our endeavours about them; it will follow that it muſt conduce alſo to beget an eſteem, a deſire, a proſecution of things conducing to our future welfare; both by removing the obſtacles of doing ſo, and by engaging us to conſider the importance of thoſe things in compariſon with theſe. By removing obſtacles I ſay; for while our hearts are poſſeſſed with regard and paſſion toward theſe preſent things, there can be no room left in them for reſpect and affection toward things future. 'Tis in our ſoul as in the reſt of nature; there can be no penetration of objects (as it were) in our hearts, nor any vacuity in them; our mind no more than our body can be in ſeveral places, or tend ſeveral ways, or abide in perfect reſt; yet ſome-where it will always be; ſome-whither it will always go; ſome-what it will ever be doing. If we *have a treaſure* here (ſome-what we greatly like and much confide in) *our hearts will be here* with it; and if here, they cannot be otherwhere; they will be taken up; they will reſt ſatisfied; they will not care to ſeek farther. If we affect worldly glory and delight in the applauſe of men, we ſhall not be ſo careful to pleaſe God, and ſeek his favour. If we admire and repoſe confidence in riches, it will make us neglectful of God, and diſtruſtful of his Providence; if our mind thirſts after, and ſucks in greedily ſenſual pleaſures, we ſhall not reliſh ſpiritual delights, attending the practice of vertue and piety, or ariſing from good conſcience; adhering to, attending upon Maſters of ſo different, ſo oppoſite a quality is inconſiſtent; they cannot abide peaceably together, they cannot both rule in our narrow breaſts; we ſhall love and hold to the one; hate and deſpiſe the other. *If any man love the World, the love of the Father is not in him*; the love of the World, as the preſent gueſt, ſo occupies and fills the room; that it will not admit, cannot hold the love of God. But when the heart is diſcharged and emptied of theſe things; when we begin to deſpiſe them as baſe and vain; to diſtaſt them as inſipid and unſavoury; then naturally will ſucceed a deſire after other things promiſing a more ſolid content; and deſire will breed endeavour; and endeavour (furthered by God's aſſiſtence always ready to back it) will yeild ſuch a glimps and taſte of thoſe things, as will ſo comfort and ſatisfie our minds, that thereby they will be drawn and engaged into a more earneſt proſecution of them. When (I ſay) driving on ambitious Projects, heaping up Wealth, providing for the fleſh (by our reflecting on the ſhortneſs and frailty of our life) become ſo inſipid to us, that we find little appetite to them, or reliſh in them; our reſtleſs minds will begin to hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſs, deſiring ſome ſatisfaction thence: Diſcerning theſe ſecular and carnal fruitions to be meer *huſks* (the proper food of ſwine) we ſhall bethink our ſelves of that better nouriſhment (of rational or ſpiritual comfort) which our Fathers houſe doth afford to his children and ſervants. Being ſomewhat diſentangled from the care of our farms and our trafficks; from yoaking our oxen and being married to our preſent delights; we may be at leiſure, and in diſpoſition to comply with divine invitations to entertainmentt ſpiritual. Experiencing, that our trade about theſe petty commodities turns to ſmall accompt, and that in the end we ſhall be nothing richer thereby; reaſon will induce us with the Merchant in the Goſpel *to ſell all that we have* (to forego our preſent intereſts and deſigns) for the purchaſing that *rich Pearl* of God's Kingdom,

Matt. 6. 21.

John 5. 44. 12. 43.

Matt. 6. 24.

Rom. 8. 5.

1 John 2. 15.

Luke 22. 5.

Matt. 22. 5.

Matt. 13. 46.

dom, which will yeild ſo exceeding profit; the gain of preſent comfort to our conſcience, and eternal happineſs to our ſouls, In fine, when we conſider ſeriouſly, that *we have here no abiding City*, but are onely *ſojourners and pilgrims upon Earth*; that all our care and pain here do regard only an uncertain and tranſitory ſtate; and will therefore ſuddenly as to all fruit and benefit be loſt unto us; this will ſuggeſt unto us, with the good Patriarchs, κρείττονος ὀρέγεσθαι πατρίδος, *to long after a better Countrey*; a more aſſured, and laſting ſtate of life; where we may enjoy ſome certain and durable repoſe; to tend homeward, in our deſires and hopes, toward thoſe eternal manſions of joy and reſt prepared for God's faithful ſervants in Heaven. Thus will this conſideration help toward the bringing us to inquire after and regard the things concerning our future ſtate; and in the reſult will engage us to compare them with theſe preſent things, as to our concernment in them and the conſequence of them to our advantage or damage, whence a right judgment, and a congruous practice will naturally follow. There be four ways of comparing the things relating to this preſent life with thoſe which reſpect our future ſtate: Comparing the goods of this with the goods of that; the evils of this with the evils of that; the goods of this with the evils of that; the evils of this with the goods of that. All theſe compariſons we may find often made in Scripture; in order to the informing our judgment about the reſpective value of both ſorts; the preſent conſideration intervening, as a ſtandard to meaſure and try them by.

Heb. 13. 14. 1 Pet. 2. 11. Heb. 11. 16.

Firſt then; comparing the preſent goods with thoſe which concern our future ſtate, ſince the tranſitorineſs and uncertainty of temporal goods detract from their worth, and render them in great degree contemptible; but the durability and certainty of ſpiritual goods doth encreaſe their rate, and make them exceedingly valuable; 'tis evident hence, that ſpiritual goods are infinitely to be preferred in our opinion, to be more willingly embraced, to be more zealouſly purſued than temporal goods, that, in caſe of competition, when both cannot be enjoyed, we are in reaſon obliged readily to part with all theſe, rather than to forfeit our title unto, or hazard our hope of thoſe Thus in the Scripture it is often diſcourſed: *The world* (ſaith St. *John*) *paſſeth away, and the deſire thereof*; *but he that doeth the will of God, abideth for ever*: The World, and all that is deſirable therein is tranſient; but obedience to God's commandments is of an everlaſting conſequence; whence he infers, that we ſhould *not love the world*; that is, not entertain ſuch an affection thereto, as may any way prejudice the love of God, or hinder the obedience ſpringing thence, or ſuitable thereto.

1 John 2. 17.

All fleſh is graſs (ſaith St. *Peter*) *and all the glory of man as the flower of the graſs*; *the graſs withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away*; *But the word of the Lord endureth for ever*: All worldly glory is frail and fading, but the Word of God is eternally firm and permanent; that is, the good things by God promiſed to them, who faithfully ſerve him, ſhall infallibly be conferred on them to their everlaſting benefit; whence it follows, that as he exhorts, we are bound to gird up the loins of our mind, to be ſober, and hope to the end; to proceed and perſiſt conſtantly in faithful obedience to God. *Charge thoſe* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *who are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor truſt in uncertain riches, but in the living God*; *that they do good, be rich in good works, ready to diſtribute, willing to communicate*; *treaſuring up for themſelves a good foundation for the future*; *that they may attain everlaſting life*: Since, argues he, preſent riches are of uncertain

1 Pet. 1. 24. v. 13. 1 Tim. 6. 19.

uncertain, and ſhort continuance; but faith and obedience to God, exerciſed in our charity and mercy toward men, are a certain ſtock improveable to our eternal intereſt; therefore be not proud of, nor relye upon thoſe, but regard eſpecially, and employ our ſelves upon theſe. Our Saviour himſelf doth often inſiſt upon, and inculcate this compariſon: *Treaſure not unto your ſelves treaſures upon earth, where moth and ruſt do corrupt; and where thieves break through and ſteal; but treaſure up to your ſelves treaſures in heaven, where moth and ruſt do not corrupt, and where thieves do not break thorough and ſteal. Do not take care for your ſoul, what ye ſhall eat, and what ye ſhall drink; nor for your body, what ye ſhall put on; but ſeek firſt the kingdom of God. Labour not for the food that periſheth, but for the food that abideth to eternal life; ſell your ſubſtance, and give alms; provide your ſelves bags that wax not old; an indefectible treaſure in the heavens:* Thus doth the Holy Scripture, ſetting forth the uncertainty and tranſitorineſs of the preſent, the certainty and permanency of future goods, declare the excellency of theſe above thoſe; adviſing thereupon, with higheſt reaſon, that we willingly reject thoſe (in real effect, if need be, however always in ready diſpoſition of mind) in order to the procuring or ſecuring of theſe. It alſo, for our example and encouragement, commends to us the wiſdom and vertue of thoſe Perſons, who have effectually practiſed this duty: of *Abraham, our Father*, who, in expectation of that well-founded City, made and built by God, did readily deſert his Countrey and Kindred, with all preſent accommodations of life; of *Moſes*, who diſregarded the ſplendours and delights of a great Court; rejected the alliance of a great Princeſs, and *refuſed to be called the ſon of Pharaoh's daughter*; in reſpect to the μισθαποδοσία, that future diſtribution of reward; a ſhare wherein ſhall aſſuredly fall to them, who above all other conſiderations regard the performance of their duty to God; of the *Apoſtles*, who *forſook all*, Parents, Brethren, Lands, Houſes, Trades, receits of Cuſtome, to follow *Chriſt*; him at preſent poor, and naked of all ſecular honour, power, wealth and delight; in hope onely to receive from him divine benefits, and future preferments in his Kingdom; of *Mary*, who neglecting preſent affairs, and ſeating her ſelf at *Jeſus* his feet, attending to his diſcipline; is commended for her wiſdom, in minding the *onely neceſſary thing*; in chuſing *the better part, which could never be taken from her:* of St. *Paul*, who *accompted all his gains* (all his worldly intereſts and priviledges) *to be damage*, to be *dung in reſpect to Chriſt, and the excellent knowledge of him*, with the benefits thence accruing to him. On the contrary there we have *Eſau* condemned and ſtigmatized for *a profane* and a vain *perſon*, who (ἀντὶ μιᾶς βρώσεως) *for one little eating-bout*; one meſs of Pottage (for a little preſent ſatisfaction of ſenſe, or for the ſuſtenance of this frail life) did withgo his birthright, that embleme of ſpiritual bleſſings and priviledges. We have again repreſented to us that unhappy young *Gentleman*; who, though he had good qualities, rendring him amiable even to our Saviour; and had been trained up in the obſervance of God's Commandments; yet not being content to part with his large Poſſeſſions, in lieu of the treaſure by *Chriſt* offered in Heaven, was reputed deficient; could find no acceptance with God, nor admiſſion into his Kingdom; for a petty temporal commodity forfeiting an infinite eternal advantage. For, ſaith our Saviour, *He that loveth father or mother above me; he that doth not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and ſiſters, yea his own life (for me and the Goſpel) is not worthy of me, nor can be my diſciple.* He that in his eſteem or affection doth prefer any temporal advantages before the benefits

Matt. 6. 20.
v. 25.
John 6. 27.
Luke 12. 33.
Θησαυρὸν ἀνέκλειπτον.
Heb. 11. 10.
v. 23.
Matt. 19. 27.
Luke 18. 28.
Luke 10. 39.
Phil. 3. 7, 8.
Heb. 12. 16.
Mark 10. 18.
Matt. 10. 37.
Luke 14. 26.
Mark 10. 29.

benefits tendered by our Saviour (yea doth not in compariſon deſpiſe, renounce and reject his deareſt contents of life, and the very capacity of enjoying them, his life it ſelf) doth not deſerve to be reckoned among the Diſciples of *Chriſt*; to be ſo much as a Pretender to eternal joy, or a candidate of immortality. Our *Saviour* rejects all ſuch unwiſe and perverſe traders, who will not exchange brittle glaſs for ſolid gold; counterfeit gliſtering ſtones for genuine moſt pretious jewels; a garland of fading flowers for an incorruptible crown of Glory; a ſmall temporary penſion for a vaſtly rich freehold; *an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reſerved in the heavens.* Thus doth the Holy Scripture teach us to compare theſe ſorts of good things; 1 Pet. 1. 4.

And, ſecondly, ſo alſo doth it to compare the evils of both ſtates; for that ſeeing, as the ſoon ceaſing of temporal miſchiefs ſhould (in reaſonable proceeding) diminiſh the fear of them, and mitigate the grief for them; ſo the inceſſant continuance of ſpiritual evils doth (according to juſt eſtimation) render them hugely grievous and formidable; 'tis plain, that we ſhould much more diſlike, abominate, and ſhun ſpiritual evils, than temporal; that we ſhould make no queſtion rather to endure theſe paroxyſms of momentany pain, than incur thoſe chronical and (indeed) incurable maladies; that we ſhould run willingly into theſe ſhallow plaſhes of preſent inconvenience, rather than plunge our ſelves into thoſe unfathomable depths of eternal miſery. There is (I ſuppoſe) no man, who would not accompt it a very great calamity (ſuch as hardly greater could befal him here) to have *his right eye plucked out*, and *his right hand cut off*, and *his foot* taken from him; to be deformed and maimed, ſo that he can do nothing, or ſtir any whither; yet our Lord repreſents theſe to us as inconſiderable evils, yea as things very eligible and advantageous in compariſon of thoſe miſchiefs, which the voluntary not embracing them, in caſe we cannot otherwiſe than by ſo doing avoid ſin, will bring on us: συμφέρει σοι, *it is* (ſaith he) *profitable for thee, that one of thy members be loſt, rather than that thy whole body be caſt into hell*; καλόν σοι ἐστὶ, *'tis good*, 'tis excellent for thee *to enter into life lame and maimed, and one ey'd, rather than having two hands, and two feet, and two eyes* (in all integrity and beauty of this temporal, or corporal ſtate) *to be caſt into eternal fire.* To be baniſhed from ones native ſoil, ſecluded from all comforts of friendly acquaintance, deveſted irrecoverably of great eſtate and dignity; becoming a vagrant and a ſervant in vile employment, in a ſtrange Countrey, every Man would be apt to deem a wretched condition; yet *Moſes*, we ſee, freely choſe it, rather than by enjoying unlawful pleaſures at home, in *Pharaoh*'s Court, to incur God's diſpleaſure and vengeance: συγκακουχεῖσθαι μᾶλλον ἐλοῦν, *chuſing rather to undergo evil together with God's people, than to have* πρόσκαιρον ἁμαρτίας ἀπόλαυσιν, *a temporary fruition of ſinful delight*, dangerous to the welfare of his ſoul. Death is commonly eſteemed the moſt extream and terrible of evils incident to man; yet our *Saviour* bids us not to regard or fear it, in compariſon of that deadly ruine, which we adventure on by offending God: *I ſay unto you my friends* (ſaith he, he intended it for the moſt friendly advice) *Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have nothing farther to do; but I will ſhew you whom ye ſhall fear; Fear him, who after he hath killed, hath power to caſt into hell*; to caſt both body and ſoul into Hell, and deſtroy them therein; *Yea, I ſay unto you* (ſo he inculcates and impreſſes it upon them) *fear him.* Heb. 11. 25. Luke 12. 4. Matt. 10. 28. Ἀποκτεινάντα δύναντα. βαλεῖν εἰς.

But thirdly; Conſidering the good things of this life together with the evils of that, which is to come; Since enjoying theſe goods in compariſon

riſon with enduring thoſe evils is but rejoicing for a moment in reſpect of mourning to eternity; if upon the ſeeming ſweetneſs of theſe enjoyments to our carnal appetite be conſequent a remedileſs diſtempering of our ſoul; ſo that what taſts like honey proves gall in the digeſtion; gripes our bowels, gnaws our heart, and ſtings our conſcience for ever; if preſent mirth and jollity have a tendency to that dreadful weeping and wailing and gnaſhing of teeth threatened in the Goſpel; if for the praiſe and favour of a few giddy men here we venture eternal ſhame and confuſion before God and Angels and all good men hereafter; if for attaining or preſerving a ſmall ſtock of uncertain riches in this World we ſhall reduce our ſelves into a ſtate of moſt uncomfortable nakedneſs and penury in the other. 'Tis clear as the Sun that we are downright fools and mad men, if we do not upon theſe accompts rather willingly reject all theſe good things, than hazard incurring any of thoſe evils; for, ſaith truth it ſelf,

Mark 8. 36, Luke 9. 25. *What will it profit a man, if he gain the whole World* (κ) ζημιωθῇ τὴν ψυχὴν) *and be endamaged as to his ſoul*, or loſe his ſoul as a mulct. 'Tis a very diſadvantageous bargain for all the conveniences this World can afford to be deprived of the comforts of our immortal ſtate. But,

Laſtly, comparing the evils of this life with the benefits of the future, ſince the worſt tempeſts of this life will be ſoon blown over, the bittereſt croſſes muſt expire (if not before, however) with our breath; but the good things of the future ſtate are immutable and perpetual; 'tis in evident conſequence moſt reaſonable; that we freely (if need be) undertake, and patiently endure theſe for the ſake of thoſe; that in hope of

1 Pet. 1. 4. that *incorruptible inheritance, laid up for us in Heaven*, we not only ſupport and comfort our ſelves, but even rejoice and exult in all the afflictions by God's wiſe and juſt diſpenſation impoſed on us here; as they in St. *Peter*; wherein (ſaith he) *ye greatly rejoice (or exult,) being for a little while as in heavineſs through manifold * afflictions or trials. Accounting it all joy* (ſaith St. *James*) *when ye fall into divers temptations* (that is afflictions or trials) *knowing that the trial of your faith perfecteth patience*; that is, ſeeing the ſufferance of theſe preſent evils conduceth to the furtherance of your ſpiritual and eternal welfare. And, *We glory in tribulation*, ſaith St. *Paul*; rendring the ſame accompt, becauſe it tended to their ſouls advantage: St. *Paul*, than whom no man perhaps ever more deeply taſted of the cup of affliction; and that tempered with all the moſt bitter ingredients which this World can produce; Whoſe life was ſpent in continual agitation and unſettledneſs; in all hardſhips of travel and labour and care; in extreme ſufferance of all pains both of body and mind; in all imaginable dangers and difficulties and diſtreſſes, that nature expoſes man unto, or humane malice can bring upon him; in all wants of natural comfort (food, ſleep, ſhelter, liberty, health) in all kinds of diſgrace and contumely; as you may ſee in thoſe large inventories of his ſufferings,

Ibid. Ἀγαλλιᾶσθε ὀλίγον ἄρτι * Πειρασμοῖς. Jam. 1. 2.

Rom. 5. 8.

Ἐν ἀγαπασαίαις.

2 Cor. 11. 23. 6. 5. regiſtred by himſelf, in the 6th and 11th *Chapters* of his 2d *Epiſtle* to the *Corinthians*; Yet all this conſidering the good things he expected afterward to enjoy, he accompted very ſlight and tolerable: *For* (ſaith he)

2 Cor. 4. 17. 5. 1. Τὸ γὰρ παραυτίκα ἐλαφρὸν τῆς θλίψεως. *our lightneſs of affliction, that is for a little while here, worketh for us a far more exceeding weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are ſeen; but at thoſe, which are not ſeen; for the things which are ſeen are temporal; but the things which are not ſeen are eternal. For we know, that when our earthly houſe of this tabernacle* (of this unſteady tranſitory abode) *is diſſolved we are to have a tabernacle from God, a houſe not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens. I reckon,* ſaith he again, that is having made a due com-

Rom. 8. 18.

pariſon

pariſon and computation I find) *that the ſufferings of this preſent time are not worthy* (that is are not conſiderable, come under no rate or proportion) *in reſpect of the glory which ſhall be revealed* (or openly conferred) *upon us.* The like opinion had thoſe faithful Chriſtians, in the *Epiſtle* to the *Hebrews*, of whom 'tis ſaid, that *being expoſed to publick ſcorn as in a theatre, with reproaches and afflictions, they did with gladneſs accept the ſpoiling* * (or rapine) *of their goods; knowing that they had in Heaven a better and more induring ſubſtance.* But the principal example (moſt obliging our imitation) of this wiſe choice is that of our *Lord* himſelf; who, in contemplation of the future great ſatisfaction and reward of patient ſubmiſſion to the divine will, did willingly undergo the greateſt of temporal ſorrows and ignominies; *Who* (ſaith the *Apoſtle to the Hebrews*, propounding his example to us) *for the joy that was ſet before him endured the Croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame, and is ſet down at the right hand of God.*

Heb. 10. 34. Θεατριζόμενοι * Αρπαγὴν.

Heb. 12. 2.

Thus immediately, or by an eaſie inference doth the conſideration of this lifes ſhortneſs and uncertainty confer to that main part of wiſdom, rightly to value the things about which we are converſant; diſpoſing us conſequently to moderate our affections, and rightly to guide our actions about them; fitting us therefore for the performance of thoſe duties ſo often enjoined us; of not caring for, not truſting in; not minding (unduly that is, and immoderately) things below; of dying to this World and taking up our croſs, or contentedly ſuffering (in ſubmiſſion to God's will) all loſs and inconvenience; as alſo to the placing our meditation and care; our love and deſire; our hope and confidence; our joy and ſatisfaction; our moſt earneſt pains and endeavours upon things divine, ſpiritual and eternal.

IV. I proceed to another general benefit of that general conſideration; which is that it may engage us to a good improvement of our time; the doing which is a very conſiderable piece of wiſdom. For if time be, (as *Theophraſtus* called it truely) *a thing of moſt pretious value* (or expence) as it were a great folly to laviſh it away unprofitably; ſo to be frugal thereof, and careful to lay it out for the beſt advantage, eſpecially every Man having ſo little ſtore thereof, muſt be a ſpecial point of Prudence. *To be covetous of time* (*Seneca* tells us) *is a commendable avarice*; it being neceſſary for the accompliſhment of any worthy enterprize; there being nothing excellent, that can ſoon or eaſily be effected. Surely he that hath much and great buſineſs to diſpatch; and but a little time allowed for it, is concerned to husband it well; not to loſe it wholly in idleneſs; not to trifle it away in unneceſſary divertiſements; not to put himſelf upon other impertinent affairs; above all not to create obſtacles to himſelf, by purſuing matters of a tendency quite contrary to the ſucceſs of his main undertakings. 'Tis our caſe; we are obliged here to negotiate in buſineſs of infinite price and conſequence to us; no leſs than the ſalvation of our ſouls and eternal happineſs; and we ſee, that our time to drive it on and bring it to a happy iſſue is very ſcant and ſhort; ſhort in it ſelf; and very ſhort in reſpect to the nature of thoſe affairs; the great variety, and the great difficulty of them: The great father of *Phyſicians* did quicken the ſtudents of that faculty to diligence, by admoniſhing them (in the firſt place, ſetting it in the front of his famous *Aphoriſms*) that, *life is ſhort, and art is long.* And how much more ſo is the art of living well (that moſt excellent and moſt neceſſary art; for indeed vertue is not a gift of nature, but a work of art; an effect of labour and ſtudy) this, I ſay moſt

Πολυτελέστατον ἀναλώματος.

Nulla niſi temporis honeſta eſt avaritia. Sen:

Non enim dat natura virtutem; ars eſt bonum fieri Sen. *Ep.* 89.

moſt needful and uſeful art of living vertuouſly and piouſly; this art of ſpiritual Phyſick; (of preſerving and recovering our ſouls health) how much longer is it? how many rules are to be learnt? how many precepts to be obſerved in order thereto? We are bound to furniſh our minds with needful knowledge of God's will and our duty; we are to bend our unwilling wills to a ready compliance with them; we are to adorn our ſouls with diſpoſitions ſutable to the future ſtate (ſuch as may qualify us for the preſence of God, and converſation with the bleſſed ſpirits above) it is incumbent on us to mortify corrupt deſires, to reſtrain inordinate paſſions, to ſubdue natural propenſities, to extirpate vitious habits; in order to the effecting theſe things, to uſe all fit means; devotion toward God, ſtudy of his Law, reflexion upon our actions, with all ſuch ſpiritual inſtruments; the performing which duties, as it doth require great care and pains, ſo it needs much time; all this is not *dictum factum*, as ſoon done as ſaid; a few ſpare minutes will not ſuffice to accompliſh it. Natural inclination, that wild beaſt within us, will not ſo preſently be tamed, and made tractable by us. Ill habits cannot be removed without much exerciſe and attendance; as they were begot, ſo they muſt be deſtroyed, by a conſtant ſucceſſion, and frequency of acts. Fleſhly luſt is not to be killed with a ſtab or two; it will fight ſtoutly, and rebel often, and hold out long before with our utmoſt endeavour we can obtain an entire victory over it. No vertue is acquired in an inſtant, but by degrees, ſtep by ſtep; from the ſeeds of right inſtruction and good reſolution it ſprings up, and grows forward by a continual progreſs of cuſtomary practice; 'tis a child of patience, a fruit of perſeverance (that ὑπομονὴ ἔργου ἀγαθοῦ, *enduring in doing well*, St. *Paul* ſpeaks of) and conſequently a work of time, for enduring implies a good ſpace of time. Having therefore ſo much to doe, and of ſo great concernment, and ſo little a portion of time for it, it behoves us to be careful in the improvement of what time is allowed us; to embrace all opportunities and advantages offered; to go the neareſt way, to uſe the beſt *compendiums* in the tranſaction of our buſineſs; not to be ſlothful and negligent, but active and intent about it; (for as time is diminiſhed, and in part loſt by ſloth or ſlackneſs; ſo it is enlarged, and, as it were, multiplied by induſtry; my day is two in reſpect of his, who doeth but half my work.) Not (alſo) to conſume our time in fruitleſs paſtimes, and curious entertainments of fancy; being idly buſie about impertinences and trifles (we call it ſport, but 'tis a ſerious damage to us;) not to immerſe our ſelves in multiplicities of needleſs care about ſecular matters, which may diſtract us, and bereave us of fit leiſure for our great employment; that which our *Saviour* calls περιβάλλεσθαι περὶ πολλὰ, *to keep a great deal of doe* and ſtir (to be jumbled about as it were, and confounded) *about many things*; and, περισπᾶσθαι περὶ πολλὴν διακονίαν, *to be diſtracted* and perplexed *about much comberſome ſervice*; which St. *Paul* calls πεπλέχθαι ἐν τοῖς βίου πραγματείαις, *to be implicated* and entangled (as in a net) *with the negotiations of this preſent life*; ſo that we ſhall not be expedite, or free to beſtir our ſelves about our more weighty affairs. The ſpending much time about thoſe things doth ſteal it from theſe; yea, doth more than ſo, by diſcompoſing our minds ſo that we cannot well employ what time remains upon our ſpiritual concernments. But eſpecially we ſhould not proſtitute our time upon vitious projects and practices; doing which is not onely a prodigality of the preſent time, but an abridgment of the future; it not onely doth not promote or ſet forward our buſineſs, but brings it backward; and makes us more work than we had before;

Τί φθείρει ἕξος; ἐναντίον ἕξος Epict.

Rom. 2. 7.

Luke 10. 40.

1 Tim. 2. 4.

'tis

'tis a going in a way directly contrary to our journeys-end. The Scripture aptly reſembles our life to a wayfaring, a condition of travel and pilgrimage; now he that hath a long journey to make, and but a little time of day to paſs it in, muſt in reaſon ſtrive to ſet out ſoon, and then to make good ſpeed; muſt proceed on directly, making no ſtops or deflections (not calling in at every ſign that invites him, not ſtanding to gaze at every object ſeeming new or ſtrange to him; not ſtaying to talk with every Paſſenger that meets him; but rather avoiding all occaſions of diverſion and delay) leſt he be ſurprized by the night, be left to wander in the dark, be excluded finally from the place whither he tends: So muſt we in our courſe towards Heaven and happineſs; take care that we ſet out ſoon (procraſtinating no time, but beginning inſtantly to inſiſt in the ways of Piety and Vertue) then proceed on ſpeedily, and perſiſt conſtantly; no-where ſtaying or loitering, ſhunning all impediments and avocations from our Progreſs; leſt we never arrive near, or come too late unto the gate of Heaven. St. *Peter* tells us, that the end of all things doth approach, and thereupon adviſes us *to be ſober, and to watch unto prayer*; for that the leſs our time is, the more intent and induſtrious it concerns us to be. And, St. *Paul* injoins us to *redeem the time, becauſe the days are evil*; that is, ſince we can enjoy no true quiet or comfort here, we ſhould improve our time to the beſt advantage for the future; he might have alſo adjoined, with the Patriarch *Jacob*, the paucity of the days to their badneſs; becauſe *the days of our life are few and evil*, let us redeem the time; *Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble*: So few indeed they are, that 'tis fit we ſhould loſe none of them, but uſe them all in preparation toward that great change we are to make; that fatal paſſage out of this ſtrait time into that boundleſs eternity. So, it ſeems, we have *Job*'s example of doing: *All the days* (ſays he) *of my appointed time will I wait till my change come.* I end this Point with that ſo comprehenſive warning of our Saviour: *Take heed to your ſelves, leſt at any time your hearts be overcharged with ſurfeiting and drunkenneſs, and cares of this life; and ſo that day come upon you unawares. Watch ye therefore and pray, that ye may be counted worthy to eſcape —— and to ſtand before the ſon of man.*

1 Pet. 4. 7. Eph. 5. 15. Gen. 47. 9. Job 14. 1. Job 14. 14. Luke 21. 34.

V. I ſhall adjoin but one uſe more, to which this conſideration may be ſubſervient, which is, that it may help to beget and maintain in us (that which is the very heart and ſoul of all goodneſs) *Sincerity*. Sincerity in all kinds, in our thoughts, words and actions. To keep us from harbouring in our breaſts ſuch thoughts, as we would be afraid or aſhamed to own: from ſpeaking otherwiſe than we mean, than we intend to doe, than we are ready any-where openly to avow; from endeavouring to ſeem what we are not; from being one thing in our expreſſions and converſations with men; another in our hearts, or in our cloſets. From acting with oblique reſpects to private intereſts or paſſions, to humane favour or cenſure (in matters, I mean, where duty doth intervene, and where pure conſcience ought to guide and govern us) from making profeſſions and oſtentations (void of ſubſtance, of truth, of knowledge, of good purpoſe) great ſemblances of peculiar ſanctimony, integrity, ſcrupuloſity, ſpirituality, refinedneſs, like thoſe *Phariſees* ſo often therefore taxed in the Goſpel; as alſo from palliating, as thoſe men did, deſigns of ambition, avarice, envy, animoſity, revenge, perverſe humour, with pretences of zeal and conſcience. We ſhould indeed ſtrive to be good

(and that in all real ſtrictneſs, aiming at utmoſt perfection) in outward act, and appearance, as well as in heart and reality; for the glory of
Rom. 12. 17. God and example of men (*providing things honeſt in the ſight of all men*) but we muſt not ſhine with a falſe luſtre, nor care to ſeem better than we are, nor intend to ſerve our ſelves in ſeeming to ſerve God; bartering ſpiritual commodities for our own glory or gain. For ſince the day approaches
Rom. 2. 16. when *God will judge* τὰ κρυπτὰ ἀνθρώπων, *the things men do ſo ſtudiouſly conceal*;
Eccl. 12. 14. when *God ſhall bring every work into judgment, with every ſecret thing,*
2 Cor. 5. 10. *whether it be good or whether it be evil*; ſince *we muſt all appear* (or rather
Οὐ γὰρ παρεσταθῆναι ἡμᾶς ἁπλῶς δεῖ, ἀλλὰ φανερωθῆναι. Chryſoſt. be all made apparent, be manifeſted and diſcovered) *at the tribunal of Chriſt*: ſince *there is nothing covered, which ſhall not be revealed, nor hid that ſhall not be known; ſo that whatever is ſpoken in the ear in cloſets, ſhall be proclaimed on the houſe tops*: Since at length, and that within a very ſhort
Luke 12. 2, 3. time (no man knows how ſoon) the whiſpers of every mouth (the cloſeſt murmurs of detraction, ſlander and ſycophantry) ſhall become audible to every ear; the abſtruſeſt thoughts of all hearts (the cloſeſt malice and envy) ſhall be diſcloſed in the moſt publick Theatre before innumerable ſpectatours; the truth of all pretences ſhall be throughly examined; the juſt merit of every Perſon, and every cauſe ſhall with a moſt exact ſcrutiny be ſcann'd openly in the face of all the World; to what purpoſe can it be to juggle or baffle for a time; for a few days (perhaps for a few minutes) to abuſe, or to amuſe thoſe about us with crafty diſſimulation or deceit? Is it worth the pains to deviſe plauſible ſhifts, which ſhall inſtantly, we know, be detected and defeated; to bedaub foul deſigns with a fair varniſh, which death will preſently wipe off; to be dark and cloudy in our proceedings, whenas a clear day (that will certainly diſpel all darkneſs and ſcatter all miſts) is breaking in upon us; to make vizors for our faces, and cloaks for our actions, whenas we muſt very ſhortly be expoſed, perfectly naked and undiſguiſed, in our true colours, to the general view of Angels and Men? Heaven ſees at preſent what we think and doe, and our conſcience cannot be wholly ignorant or inſenſible; nor can Earth it ſelf be long unacquainted therewith. Is it not much better, and more eaſie (ſince it requires no pains or ſtudy) to act our ſelves, than to accommodate our ſelves to other unbeſeeming and undue parts; to be upright in our intentions, conſiſtent in our diſcourſes, plain in our dealings, following the ſingle and uniform guidance of our reaſon and conſcience, than to ſhuffle and ſhift, wandring after the various uncertain and inconſtant opinions or humours of men? What matter is it, what cloaths we wear, what garb we appear in, during this poſture of travel and ſojourning here; what for the preſent we go for; how men eſteem us, what they think of our actions? St. *Paul* at
1 Cor. 4. 3. leaſt did not much ſtand upon it; for *with me*, ſaid he, *'tis a very ſmall thing* (ἐλάχιστον, the leaſt thing that can come under conſideration) *to be judged of you, or of humane day* (that is, of this preſent tranſitory, fallible, reverſible judgment of men.) If we mean well and do righteouſly our conſcience will at preſent ſatisfie us, and the divine (unerring and impartial) ſentence will hereafter acquit us; no unjuſt or uncharitable cenſure ſhall prejudice us; if we entertain baſe deſigns, and deal unrighteouſly; as our conſcience will accuſe and vex us here, ſo God will ſhortly condemn and puniſh us; neither ſhall the moſt favourable conceit of men
1 Cor. 3. 13. ſtand us in ſtead. *Every man's work ſhall become manifeſt; for the day ſhall declare it; becauſe it ſhall be revealed by fire; and the fire* (that is, a ſevere and ſtrict inquiry) *ſhall try every man's work, of what ſort it is.* I cannot

inſiſt

inſiſt more on this Point; I ſhall onely ſay, that conſidering the brevity and uncertainty of our preſent ſtate, the greateſt ſimplicity may juſtly be deemed the trueſt wiſdom; that who deceives others doth cozen himſelf moſt; that the deepeſt policy (uſed to compaſs, or to conceal bad deſigns) will in the end appear the moſt downright folly.

I might add to the precedent diſcourſes, that *Philoſophy* it ſelf hath commended this conſideration as a proper and powerful inſtrument of vertue; reckoning the practice thereof a main part of wiſdom; the greateſt proficient therein in common eſteem, *Socrates*, having defined Philoſophy (or the ſtudy of wiſdom) to be nothing elſe, but (μελέτη θανάτου) *the ſtudy of death*; intimating alſo (in *Plato*'s *Phædon*) that this ſtudy, the meditation of death and preparation of his mind to leave this World, had been the conſtant and chief employment of his life. That likewiſe, according to experience, nothing more avails to render the minds of men ſober and well compoſed, than ſuch ſpectacles of Mortality, as do impreſs this conſideration upon them. For whom doth not the ſight of a Coffin or of a Grave gaping to receive a friend perhaps, or an ancient Acquaintance; however a man in nature and ſtate altogether like our ſelves; of the mournful looks and habits, of all the ſad pomps and ſolemnities attending man unto his long home, by minding him of his own frail condition, affect with ſome ſerious, ſome honeſt, ſome wiſe thoughts? And if we be reaſonable men we may every day ſupply the need of ſuch occaſions, by repreſenting to our ſelves the neceſſity of our ſoon returning to the duſt; dreſſing in thought our own Herſes, and celebrating our own Funerals; by living under the continual apprehenſion and ſenſe of our tranſitory and uncertain condition; dying daily, or becoming already dead unto this World. The doing which effectually being the gift of God, and an eſpecial work of his Grace, let us of him humbly implore it, ſaying after the Holy *Prophet*, *Lord, ſo teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wiſedom.* Amen.

Τοῦτο ἔχει ἡ τελειότης τῆς ἕξεως τὸ πᾶσαν ἡμέραν οἷ τελευταίαν διεξάγειν. Anton. lib. 7.

SERMON XVI.

The Danger and miſchief of delaying Repentance.

PSAL. CXIX. 60.

I made haſte, and delayed not to keep thy Commandments.

THIS Pſalm (no leſs excellent in vertue, than large in bulk) containeth manifold reflexions upon the nature, the properties, the adjuncts and effects of God's Law, many ſprightly ejaculations about it (conceived in different forms of ſpeech; ſome in way of petition,

petition, ſome of thanksgiving, ſome of reſolution, ſome of aſſertion or aphoriſm) many uſeful directions, many zealous exhortations to the obſervance of it; the which are not ranged in any ſtrict order, but, (like a variety of fair flowers and wholſome herbs in a wide field) do with a grateful confuſion lie diſperſed, as they freely did ſpring up in the heart, or were ſuggeſted by the devout ſpirit of him, who indited the *Pſalm*; whence no coherence of ſentences being deſigned, we may conſider any one of them abſolutely or ſingly by it ſelf.

Among them, that which I have picked out for the ſubject of my diſcourſe, implieth an excellent rule of practice, authoriſed by the *Pſalmiſt*'s example; it is propounded in way of devotion or immediate addreſs to God; unto whoſe infallible knowledge his conſcience maketh an appeal concerning his practice; not as boaſting thereof, but as praiſing God for it, unto whoſe gratious inſtruction and ſuccour he frequently doth aſcribe all his performances: But the manner of propounding I ſhall not inſiſt upon; the rule it ſelf is, that ſpeedily, without any procraſtination or delay, we ſhould apply our ſelves to the obſervance of God's Commandments; the practice of which rule it ſhall be my endeavour to recommend and preſs.

Recognoſce ſingulos, conſidera univerſos, nullius non vita ſpectat in craſtinum; non enim vivunt, ſed victuri ſunt. Sen. *Ep.* 45.

It is a common practice of men, that are engaged in bad courſes, which their own conſcience diſcerneth and diſapproveth, to adjourn the reformation of their lives to a farther time, ſo indulging themſelves in the preſent commiſſion of ſin, that yet they would ſeem to purpoſe, and promiſe themſelves hereafter to repent, and take up: Few reſolve to perſiſt finally in an evil way, or deſpair of being one day reclaimed, but immediately and effectually to ſet upon it, many deem unſeaſonable or needleſs; it will, they preſume, be ſoon enough to begin to morrow or next day, a month or a year hence, when they ſhall find more commodious opportunity, or ſhall prove better diſpoſed thereto; in the mean time with *Solomon*'s ſluggard, *Yet*, ſay they, *a little ſleep, a little ſlumber, a little folding of the hands*; let us but neglect this duty, let us but ſatisfie this appetite, let us but enjoy this bout of pleaſure; hereafter God willing we mean to be more careful, we hope that we ſhall become more ſober: So like bad debtours: when our conſcience dunneth us, we always mean, we always promiſe to pay; if ſhe will ſtay a while, ſhe ſhall, we tell her, be ſatisfied; or like vain ſpendthrifts, we ſee our eſtate fly, yet preſume that it will hold out, and at length we ſhall reſerve enough for our uſe. Εἰς αὔριον τὰ σπουδαῖα, *Let ſerious buſineſs ſtay till the morrow*, was a ſaying that coſt dear to him who ſaid it; yet we in our greateſt concerns follow him.

Victuros agimus ſemper, nec vivimus unquam. Manil. 4.

Prov. 6. 10.

Plut. *in* Pelop.

Non eſt credo mihi ſapientis dicere, vivam. Mart. *I.* 16.

But how fallacious, how dangerous and how miſchievous this manner of proceeding is; how much better and more adviſable it is, after the example propounded in our Text, ſpeedily to betake our ſelves unto the diſcharge of our debt and duty to God, the following conſiderations will plainly declare.

1. We may conſider, that the obſervance of God's Commandments (an obſervance of them proceeding from an habitual diſpoſition of mind, in a conſtant tenour of practice) is our indiſpenſable duty, our main concernment, our only way to happineſs; the neceſſary condition of our attaining ſalvation; that alone which can procure God's love and favour toward us; that unto which all real bleſſings here, and all bliſs hereafter are inſeparably annexed: *Fear God and keep his Commandments, for this is the whole of man*; (the whole duty, the whole deſign, the whole perfe-

Eccl. 12. 13.

ction,

ction, the ſum of our wiſedom, and our happineſs.) *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments*: *The righteous Lord loveth righteouſneſs, his countenance doth behold the upright*; *God will render to every man according to his works*; theſe are Oracles indubitably clear, and infallibly certain; theſe are immoveable terms of juſtice between God and Man, which never will, never can be relaxed; being grounded on the immutable nature of God, and eternal reaſon of things; if God had not decreed, if he had not ſaid theſe things, they would not aſſuredly be true; for it is a foul contradiction to reaſon, that a Man ever ſhould pleaſe God without obeying him; 'tis a groſs abſurdity in nature, that a Man ſhould be happy without being good; wherefore all the wit in the World cannot deviſe a way, all the authority upon Earth (yea, I dare ſay, even in Heaven it ſelf) cannot eſtabliſh a condition, beſide faithful obſervance of God's Law, that can ſave, or make us happy; from it there can be no valid diſpenſation, without it there can be no effectual abſolution, for it there can be no acceptable commutation; nor in defect thereof will any faith, any profeſſion, any trick or pretence whatever avail, or ſignify any thing: Whatever expedient to ſupply its room ſuperſtition, miſtake, craft, or preſumption may recommend, we ſhall, relying thereon, be certainly deluded: If therefore we mean to be ſaved (and are we ſo wild as not to mean it?) if we do not renounce felicity (and do we not then renounce our wits?) to become vertuous, to proceed in a courſe of obedience, is a work that neceſſarily muſt be performed; and why then ſhould we not inſtantly undertake it; wherefore do we demur or ſtick at it? how can we at all reſt quiet, while an affair of ſo vaſt importance lieth upon our hands, or until our mind be freed of all uncertainty and ſuſpence about it? Were a probable way ſuggeſted to us of acquiring great wealth, honour or pleaſure, ſhould we not quickly run about it, could we contentedly ſleep, till we had brought the buſineſs to a ſure or hopeleſs iſſue? and why with leſs expedition or urgency ſhould we purſue the certain means of our preſent ſecurity and comfort, of our final ſalvation and happineſs? in doing ſo, are we not ſtrangely inconſiſtent with our ſelves?

Matt. 19. 27. Pſal. 11. 7. Prov. 15. 9. Rom. 2. 6. Mat. 5. 18. Luke 16. 17. Pſal. 119. 15.

Again, diſobedience is the certain road to perdition; that which involveth us in guilt and condemnation, that which provoketh God's wrath and hatred againſt us, that which aſſuredly will throw us into a ſtate of eternal ſorrow and wretchedneſs: *The fooliſh ſhall not ſtand in God's ſight, he hateth all the workers of iniquity*; *If ye do not repent, ye ſhall periſh. The wicked ſhall be turned into Hell, and all the people that forget God*; *The unrighteous ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God*; *The wicked ſhall go into everlaſting puniſhment*, theſe are denunciations no leſs ſure than ſevere, from that mouth, which is never opened in vain; from the execution whereof there can be no ſhelter or refuge; And what wiſe man, what man in his right ſenſes would for one minute ſtand obnoxious to them? Who that any-wiſe tendereth his own welfare would move one ſtep forward in ſo perillous and deſtructive a courſe? the farther in which he proceedeth, the more he diſcoſteth from happineſs, the nearer he approacheth to ruine.

Pſal. 5. 5. Luke 13. 3. Pſal. 9. 17. 1 Cor. 6. 9. Matt. 25. 46. 7. 21.

In other caſes common ſenſe prompteth men to proceed otherwiſe; for who, having rendred one his enemy, that far overmatcheth him, and at whoſe mercy he ſtandeth, will not inſtantly ſue to be reconciled? who being ſeiſed by a pernicious diſeaſe, will not haſte to ſeek a cure? who being fallen into the jaws of a terrible danger, will not nimbly leap out thence? and ſuch plainly is our caſe; while we perſiſt in ſin, we live in enmity and defiance with the Almighty, who can at his Pleaſure cruſh us;

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we lie under a fatal plague, which, if we do not ſeaſonably repent, will certainly deſtroy us; we incur the moſt dreadful of all hazards, abiding in the confines of death and deſtruction; God frowning at us, guilt holding us, Hell gaping for us: Every Sinner is (according to the *Wiſe-man*'s expreſſion) *as he that lieth down in the midſt of the ſea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a maſt*; and he that is in ſuch a caſe, is he not mad or ſenſeleſs, if he will not forthwith labour to ſwim out thence, or make all ſpeed to get down into a ſafer place? can any man with comfort lodge in a condition ſo diſmally tickliſh?

Prov. 23. 34.

2. We may conſider, that in order to our final welfare we have much work to diſpatch, the which requireth as earneſt care and painful induſtry, ſo a competent long time; which, if we do not preſently fall on, may be wanting, and thence our work be left undone, or imperfect: To conquer and correct bad inclinations, to render our ſenſual appetites obſequious to reaſon, to compoſe our paſſions into a right and ſteady order, to cleanſe our ſouls from vanity, from perverſeneſs, from ſloth, from all vitious diſtempers, and in their room to implant firm habits of vertue; to get a clear knowledge of our duty, with a ready diſpoſition to perform it; in fine, to ſeaſon our minds with holy affections, qualifying us for the preſence of God, and converſation with the bleſſed Spirits above; theſe are things that muſt be done, but cannot be done in a trice; it is not *dictum factum*, as ſoon done as ſaid; but ὑπομονὴ ἔργου ἀγαθοῦ, *a patient continuance in well-doing* is needful to atchieve it; for it no time can be redundant, the longeſt life can hardly be ſufficient: *Art is long, and life is ſhort*, may be an Aphoriſm in *Divinity* as well as in *Phyſick*; the art of living well, of preſerving our Soul's health, and curing its diſtempers, requireth no leſs time to compaſs it, than any other Art or Science.

Rom. 2. 7.

Οὐ καθ' ἑνὸς ἡμῖν χορηγεῖ βοήθειαν ὁ Θεὸς, ἀλλὰ πονουμένοις. Chryſ. ad Eph. λογ. κβ.

Vertue is not a Muſhrome, that ſpringeth up of it ſelf in one Night, when we are aſleep or regard it not: But a delicate Plant, that groweth ſlowly and tenderly, needing much pains to cultivate it, much care to guard it, much time to mature it, in our untoward ſoil, in this World's unkindly weather; happineſs is a thing too pretious to be purchaſed at an eaſie rate, Heaven is too high to be come at without much climbing; the crown of bliſs is a Prize too noble to be won without a long and a tough conflict. Neither is a vice a ſpirit, that will be conjured down by a charm, or with a *Preſto* driven away; it is not an adverſary, that can be knocked down at a blow, or diſpatched with a ſtab. Whoever ſhall pretend at any time eaſily with a celerity, by a kind of *Legerdemain* or by any myſterious knack, a Man may be ſettled in vertue, or converted from vice, common experience abundantly will confute him; which ſheweth, that a habit otherwiſe (ſetting miracles aſide) cannot be produced or deſtroyed, than by a conſtant exerciſe of acts ſutable or oppoſite thereto; and that ſuch acts cannot be exerciſed without voiding all impediments and framing all Principles of action (ſuch as temper of body, judgment of mind, influence of cuſtome) to a compliance; that who by temper is peeviſh or cholerick, cannot without maſtering that temper become patient or meek; that who from vain opinions is proud, cannot without conſidering away thoſe opinions prove humble; that who by cuſtome is grown intemperate, cannot without weaning himſelf from that cuſtome come to be ſober; that who from the concurrence of a ſorry nature, fond conceits, mean breeding and ſcurvy uſage is covetous; cannot without draining all thoſe ſources of his fault, be turned into liberal. The change of our mind is one of the greateſt alterations in nature, which cannot

O quam iſtud parum putant, quibus tam facile videtur! Quint. 12. 1.

cannot be compaſſed in any way, or within any time we pleaſe; but it muſt proceed on leiſurely and regularly, in ſuch order, by ſuch ſteps, as the nature of things doth permit; it muſt be wrought by a reſolute and laborious perſeverance; by a watchful application of mind in voiding Prejudices, in waiting for advantages, in attending to all we do; by forcible wreſting our nature from its bent, and ſwimming againſt the current of impetuous deſires; by a patient diſentangling our ſelves from practices moſt agreeable and familiar to us; by a wary fencing with temptations, by long ſtruggling with manifold oppoſitions and difficulties; whence the Holy Scripture termeth our practice a warfare, wherein we are to fight many a blood battel with moſt redoubtable foes; a combat, which muſt be managed with our beſt skill, and utmoſt might; a race, which we muſt paſs through with inceſſant activity and ſwiftneſs.

If therefore we mean to be good or to be happy, it behoveth us to loſe no time; to be preſently up at our great task; to ſnatch all occaſions, to embrace all means incident of reforming our hearts and lives. As thoſe, who have a long journey to go, do take care to ſet out early and in their way make good ſpeed, leſt the night overtake them before they reach their home; ſo it being a great way from hence to Heaven, ſeeing we muſt paſs over ſo many obſtacles, through ſo many Paths of duty before we arrive thither, it is expedient to ſet forward as ſoon as can be, and to proceed with all expedition; the longer we ſtay, the more time we ſhall need, and the leſs we ſhall have.

Ἀλλ' ἄγε νῦν ἴομεν, ἐπὶ γὰρ μέμβλωκε μάλιστα Ἦμαρ ἀτὰρ τάχα τοι ποτὶ ἔσσεται ῥῖγος ἔσαι. Hom. *Od.* ρ.

3. We may conſider, that no future time which we can fix upon will be more convenient than the preſent is for our reformation. Let us pitch on what time we pleaſe, we ſhall be as unwilling and unfit to begin as we are now; we ſhall find in our ſelves the ſame indiſpoſitions, the ſame averſeneſs, or the ſame liſtleſneſs toward it as now: There will occur the like hardſhips to deter us, and the like Pleaſures to allure us from our duty; objects will then be as preſent and will ſtrike as ſmartly upon our ſenſes; the caſe will appear juſt the ſame, and the ſame Pretences for delay will obtrude themſelves; ſo that we ſhall be as apt then as now to prorogue the buſineſs. We ſhall ſay then, to morrow I will mend; and when that morrow cometh, it will be ſtill to morrow, and ſo the morrow will prove endleſs. If like the ſimple Ruſtick, (who ſtay'd by the River ſide waiting till it had done running, that ſo he might paſs dryfoot over the chanel) we do conceit, that the ſources of ſin (bad inclinations within, and ſtrong temptations abroad) will of themſelves be ſpent or fail, we ſhall find our ſelves deluded. If ever we come to take up, we muſt have a beginning with ſome difficulty and trouble; we muſt courageouſly break through the preſent with all its enchantments; we muſt undauntedly plunge into the cold ſtream; we muſt rouſe our ſelves from our bed of ſloth; we muſt ſhake off that brutiſh improvidence which detaineth us, and why ſhould we not aſſay it now? there is the ſame reaſon now that ever we can have! yea, far more reaſon now; for if that we now begin, hereafter at any determinate time, ſome of the work will be done, what remaineth will be ſhorter and eaſier to us. Nay farther,

Cras hoc fiet; idem cras fiet, &c.
Perſ. *Sat.* 5.

Qui non eſt hodie, cras minus aptus erit.
Ovid. *de Rom. I.* Epiſt. 4. 12.

——— *qui rectè vivendi prorogat horam,*
Ruſticus expectat dum defluat amnis, at ille
Labitur, & labetur in omne volubilis ævum.
Hor. *Ep. I.* 2.

Εἰ μὲν λυσιτελὴς ἡ ὑπόθεσις ἐστιν, ἢ παντελὴς ἀπόθεσις αὐτῆς ὅτι λυσιτελεστέρα. Epiſt. 4. 12.
For the ſame reaſon we put it off, we ſhould put it away. If it be good at all, it is good at preſent.

Παρὰ τὸ σήμερον ἁμαρτάνειν εἰς πολλὰ χρὴ ἐνανάγκησιν τὰ πράγματα ἔχειν Epict. 4. 12.

4. We may conſider, that the more we defer, the more difficult and painful our work muſt needs prove; every day will both enlarge our task, and diminiſh our ability to perform it: Sin is never at a ſtay; if we do not retreat from it, we ſhall advance in it; and the farther on we go, the more we have to come back; every ſtep we take forward, (even before we can return hither, into the ſtate wherein we are at preſent) muſt be repeated; all the web we ſpin muſt be unravelled; we muſt vomit up all we take in; which to do we ſhall find very tedious and grievous.

Vice as it groweth in age, ſo it improveth in ſtature and ſtrength; from a puny Child it ſoon waxeth a luſty Stripling, then riſeth to be a ſturdy Man, and after a-while becometh a maſſy Giant, whom we ſhall ſcarce dare to encounter, whom we ſhall be very hardly able to vanquiſh; eſpecially ſeeing that as it groweth taller and ſtouter, ſo we ſhall dwindle and prove more impotent; for it feedeth upon our vitals, and thriveth by our decay; it waxeth mighty by ſtripping us of our beſt forces; by enfeebling our reaſon, by perverting our will, by corrupting our temper, by debaſing our courage, by ſeducing all our appetites and paſſions to a treacherous compliance with it ſelf; every day our mind groweth more blind, our will more reſty, our ſpirit more faint, our appetites more fierce, our paſſions more headſtrong and untameable: The power and empire of ſin do ſtrangely by degrees encroach, and continually get ground upon us, till it hath quite ſubdued and enthralled us; firſt we learn to bear it, then we come to like it, by and by we contract a friendſhip with it, then we dote upon it, at laſt we become enſlaved to it in a bondage, which we ſhall hardly be able, or willing to ſhake off; when not onely our necks are fitted to the yoke, our hands are manacled, and our feet ſhackled thereby; but our heads and hearts do conſpire in a baſe ſubmiſſion thereto: When vice hath made ſuch impreſſion on us, when this pernicious weed hath taken ſo deep root in our mind, will and affection, it will demand an extremely toilſome labour to extirpate it.

Falſis opinionibus tanto quiſque inſeritur, quanto magis in eis, familiariuſque volutatur. Aug. *Ep.* 117.

Indeed by continuance in ſin, the chief means (afforded by nature, or by grace) of reſtraining, or reducing us from it, are either cut off, or enervated and rendred ineffectual.

Μέγιστον πρὸς ἀρετὴν βούλημα ἡ αἰδώς Greg. Naz. *Or.* 20.

——— *nam quis*
Peccandi finem poſuit ſibi, quando recepit
Ejectum ſemel attrita de fronte ruborem?
Juv. *Sat.* 18.

Natural modeſty, while it laſteth, is a curb from doing ill; Men in their firſt deflexions from vertue are baſhful and ſhy; out of regard to other Mens opinion, and tenderneſs of their own honour they are afraid, or aſhamed to tranſgreſs plain rules of duty; but in proceſs this diſpoſition weareth out; by little and little they arrive to that character of the degenerate *Jews*, whom the *Prophets* call *impudent children*, having *a brow of braſs*, and *faces harder than a rock*; ſo that they commit ſin with open face, and in broad day, without any mask, without a bluſh; they deſpiſe their own reputation, and defy all cenſure of others; they outface and outbrave the World, till at length with prodigious inſolence they come to boaſt of wickedneſs, and *glory in their ſhame*, as an inſtance of high courage, and ſpecial gallantry.

Ezek. 2. 4. 3. 7. Iſa. 48. 4. Jer. 5. 3. Prov. 21. 29. Phil. 3. 19.

Ψυχὴ ἄπαξ ἁμαρτίας γνωσαμένη καὶ ἀναλγήτως διατεθεῖσα πολλῷ παρέχει τῷ νοσήματι τὸ ἀφοδήκτως, &c. Chryſ. *Tom. Orat.* 64.

Conſcience is a check to beginners in ſin, reclaiming them from it, and rating them for it; but this in long ſtanders becometh uſeleſs, either failing to diſcharge its office, or aſſaying it to no purpoſe, having often been ſlighted, it will be weary of chiding; or if it be not wholly dumb, we ſhall be deaf to its reproof: As thoſe who live by cataracts or downfalls

of

of Water are by continual noiſe ſo deafened as not to hear or mind it, ſo ſhall we in time grow ſenſeleſs, not regarding the loudeſt Peals and Ratlings of our conſcience.

The Heart of a raw Novice in impiety is ſomewhat tender and ſoft, ſo that remorſe can pierce and ſting it; his neck is yeilding and ſenſible, ſo that the yoke of ſin doth gall it; but in ſtout Proficients the heart becometh hard and ſtony, the neck ſtiff and brawny; (*an iron ſinew*, as the *Prophet* termeth it) ſo that they do not feel or reſent any thing; but are like thoſe of whom St. *Paul* ſpeaketh; ὕτινες ἀπηλγηκότες, who *being paſt feeling* all ſorrow or ſmart, *have given themſelves over unto laſciviouſneſs, to work all uncleanneſs with greedineſs.* (Ezek. 2. 4. 3. 7. Neh. 9. 29. 2 Chron. 36. 13. Dan. 5. 20.) Iſa. 48. 4. *Quo quis pejus ſe habet, minus ſentit.* Sen. *Ep.* 53. Eph. 4. 19.

When firſt we nibble at the Bait, or enter into bad courſes, our reaſon doth conteſt and remonſtrate againſt it, faithfully repreſenting to us the folly, the uglineſs, the baſeneſs, the manifold ill conſequences of ſinning; but that by continuance is muffled ſo as not to diſcern, or muzled ſo as not to declare; yea, often is ſo debauched as to excuſe, to avow and maintain, yea, to applaud and extol our miſcarriages.

For a time a Man retaineth ſome courage, and a hope that he may repent; but progreſs in ſin diſpiriteth and caſteth into deſpair; whether God be placable, whether himſelf be corrigible; an apprehenſion concerning the length of the way, or the difficulty of the work diſcourageth, and deſpondency rendreth him heartleſs and careleſs to attempt it. There is no Man that hath heard of God, who hath not at firſt ſome dread of offending him, and ſome diſſatisfaction in tranſgreſſing his will; it appearing to his mind (not yet utterly blinded and depraved) a deſperate thing to brave his irreſiſtible Power, an abſurd thing to thwart his infallible Wiſdom, a deteſtable thing to abuſe his immenſe Goodneſs; but obſtinacy in ſin doth quaſh this conſcientious awe,; ſo that at length *God is not in all his thoughts, the fear of God is not before his eyes*; the Wrath of the Almighty ſeemeth a Bugbear, the fierceſt menaces of Religion ſound but as Rattles to him. Pſal. 10. 4. 36. 1.

As for the gentle Whiſpers and Touches of Divine Grace, the monitory Diſpenſations of Providence, the good advices and wholſome reproofs of Friends, with the like means of reclaiming ſinners; theſe to Perſons *ſettled on their lees*, or fixed in bad cuſtome, are but as guſts of Wind bruſhing an old Oak, or as Waves daſhing on a Rock, without at all ſhaking or ſtirring it. Jer. 48. 11. Zeph. 1. 12.

Now when any Perſon is come to this paſs, it muſt be hugely difficult to reduce him; to retrieve a deſloured Modeſty, to quicken a jaded Conſcience, to ſupple a callous Heart, to reſettle a baffled Reaſon, to rear a dejected Courage, to recover a Soul miſerably benummed and broken, to its former vigour and integrity, can be no eaſie matter.

The diſeaſes of our Soul no leſs than thoſe of our Body, when once they are inveterate, they are become more incurable; the longer we forbear to apply due remedy, the more hard their cure will prove; if we let them proceed far, we muſt e'er we can be rid of them, undergo a courſe of Phyſick very tedious and offenſive to us; many a rough Purge, many a ſore Phlebotomy, many an irkſome ſweat we muſt endure. Yea farther,

——*fruſtra medicina paratur,*
Cum mala per longas invaluere moras. Ovid.

Ῥᾷον ἀπ' ἀρχῆς μὴ ἐνδῦναι κακίαν, ἢ φεύγουσαν διαφυγεῖν, ἢ φευγαινουσαν ἀνακοψαι. Greg. Naz. *Orat.* 26.

5. We may conſider, that by delaying to amend, to do it may become quite impoſſible; it may be ſo in the nature of the thing, it may be ſo by the will of God: The thing may become naturally impoſſible; for vice

by cuſtom may paſs into nature, and prove ſo congeneal, as if it were born with us; ſo that we ſhall propend to it as a ſtone falleth down, or as a ſpark flieth upward: By ſoaking in Voluptuouſneſs we may be ſo transformed into Brutes, by ſleeping in malice ſo converted into Fiends, that we neceſſarily ſhall act like creatures of that kind, into which we are degenerated; and then no-wiſe without a downright Miracle are we capable of being reformed. *How long*, ſaith *Solomon*, *wilt thou ſleep, O Sluggard, when wilt thou ariſe out of thy ſleep?* We may be ſo often called on, and 'tis not eaſie to awaken us, when we are got into a ſpiritual ſlumber; but when we are, *dead in treſpaſſes and ſins*, ſo that all breath of holy affection is ſtopt, and no ſpiritual pulſe from our heart doth appear; that all ſenſe of duty is loſt, all appetite to good doth fail, no ſtrength or activity to move in a good courſe doth exert it ſelf, that our good complexion is diſſolved, and all our finer ſpirits are diſſipated; that our mind is quite crazed, and all its Powers are ſhattered or ſpoiled, when thus, I ſay, we are ſpiritually dead, how can we raiſe our ſelves, what beneath omnipotency can effect it? as a ſtick, when once 'tis dry and ſtiff, you may break it, but you can never bend it into a ſtreighter poſture, ſo doth the Man become incorrigible, who is ſettled and ſtiffned in vice. The ſtain of habitual ſin may ſink in ſo deep, and ſo thoroughly tincture all our Soul, that we may be like thoſe People, of whom the *Prophet* ſaith, *Can the Ephiopian change his skin, or the Leopard his ſpots? then may ye do good, that are accuſtomed to doe evil:* Such an impoſſibility may ariſe from nature; one greater and more inſuperable may come from God.

Ἐπειδὰν εἰς ῥᾳθυμίαν ἐκπεσόντες λακτίζωσι καὶ δάκνωσι τοὺς ζηλοῦντας ἀπαλλαξαι τῆς ἀῤῥωστίας αὐτοὺς, τότε νοσῶσιν ἀνίατα. Chryſ. in Babyl. Orat. 2.

Prov. 6. 9.

Eph. 2. 1. Apoc. 3. 1. 1 Tim. 5. 6.

Frangas citius quam corrigas quæ in pravum induruerunt. Quintil. 1. 3.

Jer. 13. 23.

To an effectual repentance the ſuccour of divine grace is neceſſary; but that is arbitrarily diſpenſed; *the ſpirit bloweth where it liſteth*, yet it liſteth wiſely, with regard both to the paſt behaviour, and preſent capacities of Men; ſo that to ſuch who have abuſed it, and to ſuch who will not treat it well, it ſhall not be imparted: And can we be well aſſured, can we reaſonably hope, that after we by our preſumptuous delays have put off God and dallied with his grace; after that he long in vain hath *waited to be gratious*; after that he hath endured ſo many neglects, and ſo many repulſes from us; after that we frequently have ſlighted his open invitations, and ſmothered his kindly motions in us; in ſhort, after we ſo unworthily have miſuſed his goodneſs and patience, that he farther will vouchſafe his grace to us? when we have forfeited it, when we have rejected it, when we have ſpurned and driven it away, can we hope to recover it?

John .3 8.

Τὸ πνεῦμα τῆ χάριτος ἐνυβρίσας.
Heb. 10. 29.
Ἀδύνατον.
Heb. 6. 4.

There is a time, a ſeaſon, a day allotted to us; *our day* it is termed, *a day of ſalvation, the ſeaſon of our viſitation, an acceptable time*; wherein God freely doth exhibit grace, and preſenteth his mercy to us; if we let this day ſlip, *the night cometh when no man can work*; when *the things belonging to our peace will be hidden from our eyes*; when (as the *Prophet* expreſſeth it) we ſhall *grope for the wall like the blind, and ſtumble at noon day as in the night, and be in deſolate places as dead men*; after that day is ſpent, and that comfortable light is ſet, a diſmal night of darkneſs, of cold, of diſconſolateneſs will ſucceed; when God being *weary of bearing* with Men doth utterly deſert them, and *delivereth them over to a reprobate mind*; when ſubtracting his gratious direction and aſſiſtence, *he giveth them over to their own hearts luſts, and to walk in their own counſels*; when they are brought to complain with thoſe in the *Prophet*, *O Lord, why haſt thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our heart from thy fear?* when like

Luke 19. 42, 44. 2 Cor. 6. 2. Heb. 3. 13. John 9. 4. Luke 19. 42. Iſa. 59. 10.

Jer. 15. 6. Mal. 2. 17. Iſ. 1. 14. 7. 13. Rom. 1. 24, 26, 28. Pſal. 81. 12. Iſa. 63. 17.

Pharaoh

Pharaoh they ſurvive only as objects of God's juſtice, or occaſions to glorify his power; when like *Eſau*, they cannot find a place of repentance, *although they ſeek it carefully with tears*; when as to the fooliſh loitering Virgins, *the door* of mercy is *ſhut upon them*; when the *maſter of the houſe doth riſe and ſhut the door*, &c. when that menace of divine wiſedom cometh to be executed; *They ſhall call upon me, but I will not anſwer; they ſhall ſeek me early, but they ſhall not find me; for that they hated knowledge, and did not chuſe the fear of the Lord:* And if neglecting our ſeaſon, and preſent means, we once fall into this ſtate, then is our caſe moſt deplorable; we are dead Men irreverſibly doomed, and onely for a few moments reprieved from the ſtroak of final vengeance; *we are veſſels of wrath fitted* (or made up) *for deſtruction*; by a fatal blindneſs and obduration ſealed up to ruine; we are like the *terra damnata, that earth* (in the *Apoſtle*,) *which drinking up the rain, that cometh oft upon it, and bearing thorns and briars, is rejected, and is nigh unto curſing*, and *whoſe end is to be burned.* Wherefore according to the advice of the *Prophet*, *Seek ye the Lord, when he may be found, call ye upon him, while he is near.*

Rom. 9. 17. Heb. 13. 17. Matt. 25. 10. Luke 13. 25. Prov. 1. 28. Rom. 9. 22. Καταρτισθέντα εἰς ἀπώλειαν. Heb. 6. 7, 8. Iſa. 55. 6.

It is true, that God is ever ready upon our true converſion to receive us into favour, that his arms are always open to embrace a ſincere Penitent; that he hath declared, *whenever a wicked man turneth from his wickedneſs, and doeth that which is right, he ſhall ſave his ſoul alive*; that if *we do waſh our ſelves, make us clean, put away the evil of our doings, and ceaſe to do evil*, then *although our ſins be as ſcarlet, they ſhall be white as ſnow, though they be like crimſon they ſhall be as wool*; that if we *rend our hearts, and turn unto the Lord, he is gratious and merciful, and will repent of the evil*; that *God is good and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy unto all that call upon him*; that whenever a prodigal ſon with humble confeſſion and hearty contrition for his ſin doth *ariſe and go to his father*, he will embrace him tenderly, and entertain him kindly; that even a profane Apoſtate, and a bloody Oppreſſour (as *Manaſſes*) a lewd Strumpet (as *Magdalene*) a notable Thief (as he upon the Croſs) a timorous Renouncer (as St. *Peter*) a furious Perſecutour (as St. *Paul*) a ſtupid Idolater (as all the *Heathen* World, when the *Goſpel* came to them, was) the moſt heinous Sinner that ever hath been, or can be imagined to be, if he be diſpoſed to repent, is capable of mercy; thoſe declarations and promiſes are infallibly true, thoſe inſtances peremptorily do evince, that repentance is never ſuperannuated; that if we can turn at all, we ſhall not turn too late; that *pœnitentia nunquam ſera, modo ſeria*, is an irrefragable rule; yet nevertheleſs delay is very unſafe; for what aſſurance can we have, that God hereafter will enable us to perform thoſe conditions of bewailing our ſins, and forſaking them? have we not cauſe rather to fear that he will chaſtiſe our preſumption by withholding his Grace? for although God faileth not to yeild competent aids to Perſons who have not *deſpiſed his goodneſs and long-ſuffering that leadeth them to repentance*; yet he that wilfully or wantonly loitereth away the time, and ſquandereth the means allowed him; who refuſeth to come when God calleth, yea woeth and courteth him to repentance, how can he pretend to find ſuch favour?

Joel 2. 13. Pſal. 86. 5. Luke 15. 18. *Vid.* Chryſ. *ad* Theod. 2. *Judas* (ſaith he there) was capable of pardon. Rom. 2. 4.

We might add, that ſuppoſing God in ſuperabundance of mercy might be preſumed never to withhold his grace; yet ſeeing his grace doth not work by irreſiſtible compulſion; ſeeing the worſe qualified we are, the more apt we ſhall be to croſs and defeat its operation; ſeeing that we cannot hope that hereafter we ſhall be more fit than now to comply with it: Yea ſeeing we may be ſure, that after our hearts are hardned by perſeverance

ſeverance in ſin, we ſhall be more indiſpoſed thereto; we by delay of repentance do not only venture the forfeiture of divine grace, but the danger of abuſing it, which heinouſly will aggravate our guilt, and hugely augment our puniſhment.

We ſhould do well therefore moſt ſeriouſly to regard the *Apoſtle*'s admonition; *Exhort one another to day, while it is called to day, leſt any of you be hardened by the deceitfulneſs of ſin*: Now that we find our ſelves invited to repent, now that we apprehend ſo much reaſon for it; now that we feel our hearts ſomewhat enclined thereto; now that we have time in our hands, and are not barr'd from hopes of mercy; now that it is not extremely difficult, or not abſolutely impoſſible, let us in God's name lay hold on the occaſion, let us ſpeedily and earneſtly ſet upon the work. Farther yet,

Heb. 3. 13.

6. We ſhould conſider, that we are mortal and frail, and thence any deſigns of future reformation may be clipt off, or intercepted by death; which is always creeping toward us, and may for all we can tell be very near at hand. You ſay you will repent to morrow; but are you ſure you ſhall have a morrow to repent in? have you an hour in your hand, or one minute at your diſpoſal? have you a leaſe to ſhew for any term of life; can you claim or reckon upon the leaſt portion of time without his leave, who beſtoweth life, and dealeth out time, and ordereth all things as he pleaſeth? Can you any wiſe deſcry the juſt *meaſure of your days*, or *the bounds of your appointed time* without a ſpecial revelation from him, *in whoſe hands is your breath*; and *with whom* alone *the number of your months is* regiſtred? *Boaſt not thy ſelf of to morrow, for thou knoweſt not what a day may bring forth*, ſaith the *Wiſe-man*: boaſt not of it, that is, do not pretend it to be at thy diſpoſal, preſume not upon any thing that may befal therein; for whilſt thou preſumeſt thereon, may it not be ſaid unto thee, as to the rich Projectour in the *Goſpel*, * *Thou fool, this night ſhall thy ſoul be required of thee.* Doth not, ſeluding hidden decrees, every Man's life hang upon a thread very ſlender and frail? is it not ſubject to many diſeaſes lurking within, and to a thouſand accidents flying about us? how many, that might have promiſed themſelves as fair ſcope as we can, have been unexpectedly ſnapt away? How many have been cropt in the flower of their age and vigour of their ſtrength? Doth not every day preſent experiments of ſudden death? Do we not continually ſee that obſervation of the *Preacher* verified, *Man knoweth not his time; as the fiſhes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds are caught in the ſnare, ſo are the ſons of men ſnared in an evil time, when it cometh ſuddenly upon them?* Old men are ready to drop of themſelves, and young men are eaſily bruſhed or ſhaken down; the former viſibly ſtand upon the brink of Eternity, the latter walk upon a bottomleſs Quag, into which unawares they may ſlump; who then can anywiſe be ſecure? We are all therefore highly concerned to uſe our life, while we have it; to catch the firſt opportunity, leſt all opportunity forſake us; to cut off our ſinning, leſt our ſelves be cut off before it: And that the rather, becauſe by laviſhing, or miſemploying our preſent time, we may loſe the future, provoking God to bereave us of it; for as prolongation of time is a reward of Piety; as to obſervance of the Commandments it is promiſed, *Length of days, and long life, and peace ſhall be added unto thee*; ſo being immaturely ſnatched hence is the puniſhment awarded

Ὃς τοῖς μετανοοῦσι συγγνώμην ὑπέσχετο, τὴν δὲ ἡμέραν τοῦ ἰδίου ἀφανίσαι ἐπαγγελίας οὐκ ἐποιήσατο. Greg. in Evang. Hom. IX.

Job 12. 10. 14. 5. 7. 1. Pſal. 39. 4. 90. 12. Dan. 5. 23. Prov. 27. 1.

Οὐκ οἶδας τί τέξεται ἡ ὅπι ἔσα· μὴ ὑπαγγέλλε τὰ μὴ σά. Bal. M. exh. ad Bapt.

* Luke 12. 10.

Eccles 9. 12.

Τί γὰρ οἶδας ἄνθρωπε ἁμαρτήσας, εἰ ἡμέρας ζήσεις ἐν τῷδε τῷ βίῳ, ἵνα μὴ μετανοήσῃς &c.

Ὅπου δὲ ἡ ἔξοδός σε ἐκ τοῦ βίου ὑπάρχει, μὴ ἐν ἁμαρτίαις τελευτήσαντι μετάνοια ἐκ ἔσαι &c. Conſt. Ap. 2. 13.

Prov. 3. 2.

awarded to impious practice; ſo it is threatened that *Evil men ſhall be cut off*; Pſal. 37. 9.
that *bloody and deceitful men ſhall not live out half their days*; that *God will* Pſal. 55. 23.
wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy ſcalp of ſuch an one as goeth on Pſal. 68. 21.
ſtill in his wickedneſs: the very being unmindful of their duty is the cauſe, why men are thus ſurpriſed; for, *If*, ſaith God, *thou doſt not watch, I* Rev. 3. 3.
ſhall come upon thee as a thief, and thou ſhalt not know when I come upon thee. 16. 5.
And *If* (ſaith our Lord) *that ſervant doth ſay in his heart, my Lord delay-* Luke 12. 45,
eth his coming, &c. *The Lord of that ſervant will come in a day, when he look-* 46.
eth not for him, &c.

If then it be certain, that we muſt render a ſtrict accompt of all our doings here; if by reaſon of our frail nature and ſlippery ſtate, it be uncertain when we ſhall be ſummoned thereto; if our negligence may abridge and accelerate the term, is it not very reaſonable to obſerve thoſe advices of our Lord; *Watch, for ye do not know the day, nor the hour, when* Matt. 25. 13.
the ſon of man cometh; *Take heed to your ſelves, leſt any time your heart be* 24. 42.
overcharged with ſurfeiting and drunkenneſs, and cares of this life, and ſo Mark 13. 33.
that day come upon you unawares: Let your loins be girded about, and your Luke 12. 15,
lamps burning, and ye your ſelves like men, that wait for your Lord: And to 35.
take the counſel of the *Wiſe-man*, *Make no tarrying to turn unto the Lord,* Ecclus 5. 7.
and put not off from day to day; for ſuddenly ſhall the wrath of the Lord come forth, and in thy ſecurity ſhalt thou be deſtroyed, and periſh in the day of vengeance.

Theſe conſiderations plainly do ſhew how very fooliſh, how extremely dangerous and deſtructive the procraſtinating our reformation of life is: there are ſome others of good moment, which we ſhall reſerve.

SERMON XVII.

The Danger and miſchief of delaying Repentance.

PSAL. CXIX. 60.

I made haſte, and delayed not to keep thy Commandments.

I Proceed to the Conſiderations which yet remain to be ſpoken to.

1. We may conſider the cauſes of delay in this caſe (as in all caſes of moment) to be bad and unworthy of a Man: What can they be but either ſtupidity, that we do not apprehend the importance of the affair; or improvidence that we do not attend to the danger of perſiſting in ſin; or negligence that we do not mind our concernments; or ſloth that keepeth

Αργίας τε φάσις ἢ ἀναβολή Simpl.

keepeth us from rowſing and beſtirring our ſelves in purſuance of what appeareth expedient; or faint-heartedneſs and cowardize, that we dare not attempt to croſs our appetite, or our fancy? all which diſpoſitions are very baſe and ſhameful: It is the prerogative of humane nature to be ſagacious in eſtimating the worth, and provident in deſcrying the conſequences of things; whereas other creatures, by impulſe of ſence, do onely fix their regard on preſent appearances; which peculiar excellency by ſtupidity and improvidence we forfeit, degenerating into brutes; and negligence of that, which we diſcern mainly to concern us is a quality ſomewhat beneath thoſe, depreſſing us below beaſts, which cannot be charged with ſuch a fault; ſloth is no leſs deſpicable, rendring a man fit for nothing; nor is there any thing commonly more reproachful than want of courage: ſo bad are the cauſes of delay.

Animal hoc providum, ſagax, Cic. *de leg.* 1. Cic. *de offic.* 1.

2. And the effects are no leſs unhappy, being diſappointment, damage, trouble and ſorrow: As expedition (catching advantages and opportunities, keeping the ſpirit up in its heat and vigour, making forcible impreſſions where-ever it lighteth, driving on the current of ſucceſs) doth ſubdue buſineſs, and atchieve great exploits (as by practiſing his Motto, *to defer nothing*, *Alexander* did accompliſh thoſe mighty feats which make ſuch a clatter in ſtory; and *Cæſar* more by the rapid quickneſs and forwardneſs of undertaking, than by the greatneſs of courage, and skilfulneſs of conduct, did work out thoſe enterprizes, which purchaſed to his Name ſo much glory and renown) ſo delay and ſlowneſs do ſpoil all buſineſs, do keep off ſucceſs at diſtance from us, thereby opportunity is loſt, and advantages ſlip away; our courage doth flag, and our ſpirit languiſheth; our endeavours ſtrike faintly, and are eaſily repelled; whence diſappointment neceſſarily doth ſpring, attended with vexation.

Μηδὲν ἀναβαλλώμεθα. *Succeſſus urgere ſuos, inſtare, &c.* Luc. 1.

Pleriſque in rebus tarditas & procraſtinatio odioſa eſt. Cic. *Philip.* 6.

Αἰεὶ δ' ἀμβολίεργὸς ἀνὴρ ἄτῃσι πελάζει. Heſ.

Dum deliberamus quando incipiendum eſt, incipere jam ſerum eſt. Quint. 12. 7.

3. Again, we may conſider, that to ſet upon our duty is a great ſtep toward the performance of it; if we can reſolve well, and a little puſh forward, we are in a fair way to diſpatch; *to begin* (they ſay) *is to have half done*; to ſet out, is a good part of the journey; to riſe betimes, is oftner harder than to doe all the day's work; entring the Town, is almoſt the ſame with taking it; it is ſo in all buſineſs, it is chiefly ſo in moral practice: For if we can find in our hearts to take our leave of ſin, if we can diſengage our ſelves from the witcheries of preſent allurement; if we can but get over the threſhold, of vertuous converſation, we ſhall find the reſt beyond expectation ſmooth and expedite; we ſhall diſcover ſuch beauty in vertue, we ſhall taſt ſo much ſweetneſs in obedience as greatly will encourage us to proceed therein.

Dimidium facti qui cœpit habet. Hor. *Ep.* 1. 2.

Μίνον ἀρχὴ ὅπάντες τῷ πράγματι, &c. Chryſ. *Hom.* 6. *Orat.* p. 68.

Τὸ δυσχερὲς καὶ δυσκατόρθωτον τοῦτο ἔστι τὸ συνηθίσαι ἐπιβῶσαι τῇ εἰσόδῳ καὶ τὴν πρόσοψιν ἄψασθαι τῆς μετανοίας. *Ib.* p. 79.

Honeſtas, quæ principio anxia habetur, ubi contigerit, voluptati luxuriæque habetur. Vict. *in* Sept. Sev.

4. Again, we may conſider, that our time it ſelf is a gift, or a talent committed to us, for the improvement whereof we are reſponſible no leſs than for our Wealth, our Power, our Credit, our Parts, and other ſuch advantages, wherewith for the ſerving of God, and furthering our own ſalvation we are intruſted: *To redeem the time* is a Precept; and of all Precepts the moſt neceſſary to be obſerved, for that without redeeming (that is embracing and well employing) time we can do nothing well; no good action can be performed, no good reward can be procured by us: Well may we be adviſed to take our beſt care in husbanding it, ſeeing juſtly of all

Eph. 5. 16. Col. 4. 5.

all things it may be reckoned moſt pretious; its price being ineſtimable, and its loſs irreparable; for all the World cannot purchaſe one Moment of it more than is allowed us, neither can it, when once gone, by any means be recovered: So much indeed as we ſave thereof, ſo much we preſerve of our ſelves; and ſo far as we loſe it, ſo far in effect we ſlay our ſelves, or deprive our ſelves of life; yea by miſpending it we do worſe than ſo; for a dead ſleep, or a ceſſation from being, is not ſo bad as doing ill; all that while we live backward, or decline toward a ſtate much worſe than annihilation it ſelf. Farther

Πολυτιμήτον τὸν ἀναλωμάτον

5. Conſider, that of all time the preſent is ever the beſt for the purpoſe of amending our life: It is the onely ſure time, that which we have in our hands, and may call our own; whereas the paſt time is irrevocably gone from us; and the future may never come to us: It is abſolutely (reckoning from our becoming ſenſible of things, and accomptable for our actions) the beſt, as to our capacity of improving it;

Omnia quæ ventura ſunt in incerto jacent, protinus vive. Sen. *de vit. brev.* 9.

Optima quæque dies miſeris mortalibus ævi
Prima fugit

Virg. *Georg.* 3.

Our beſt days do firſt paſs away, was truly ſaid; the nearer to its ſource our life is, the purer it is from ſtain, the freer from clogs, the more ſuſceptive of good impreſſions, the more vivid and brisk in its activity; the farther we go on, eſpecially in a bad courſe, the nearer we verge to the dregs of our life; the more dry, the more ſtiff, the more ſluggiſh we grow; delay therefore doth ever ſteal away the flower of our age, leaving us the bran and refuſe thereof. Again,

6. If at any time we do reflect upon the time that hath already ſlipped away unprofitably from us, it will ſeem more than enough, and (if we conſider well) it will be grievous to us to loſe more; the morrow will ſeem too late to commence a good life; ἀρκετὸς ὁ παρελήλυθὼς χρόνος, *The time paſt of our life* (ſaith St. *Peter*) *may ſuffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles*, or to have continued in ill courſes; more indeed it might than ſuffice; it ſhould be abundantly too much to have imbezilled ſo large a portion of our pretious and irreparable time: After we have ſlept in neglect of our duty, ὥρα ἤδη ἐγερθῆναι, *it is* (as St. *Paul* ſaith) *now high time to awake*, unto a vigilant obſervance thereof: this we ſhall the rather doe, if we conſider, that

Sera nimis vita eſt crastina, vive hodie. Marc. 1. 15. 1 Pet. 4. 3.

Rom. 13. 11.

7. For ill living now we ſhall come hereafter to be ſorry, if not with a wholſome contrition, yet with a painful regret; we ſhall certainly one day repent, if not of our ſin, yet of our ſinning; if not ſo as to correct for the future, yet ſo as to condemn our ſelves for what is paſt: the conſideration of our having ſacrilegiouſly robb'd our Maker of the time due to his ſervice; of our having injuriouſly defrauded our ſouls of the opportunities granted to ſecure their welfare; of our having profuſely caſt away our moſt pretious hours of life upon vanity and folly, will ſometime twitch us ſorely. There is no man who doth not with a ſorrowful eye review an ill-paſt life; who would not gladly recal his miſpent time; *O mihi præteritos!* O that God would reſtore my paſt years to me, is every ſuch Man's Prayer, although it never was heard, never could be granted unto any. And what is more inconſiſtent with wiſdom, than to engage our ſelves upon making ſuch ineffectual and fruitleſs wiſhes? What is more diſagreeable to reaſon, than to do that, for which we muſt be forced to confeſs and call our ſelves fools? What Man of ſenſe for a flaſh of tranſitory Pleaſure, for a puff of vain repute, for a few ſcraps of dirty Pelf would plunge himſelf into ſuch a gulf of anguiſh?

Vix ſapit quiſquis, Poſthume, vixit heri. Mart. 5. 60.

Amplius ætatis ſpatium ſibi vir bonus, hoc eſt
Vivere bis, vita poſſe priore frui. Mart. 10. 23.

8. On the contrary, if laying hold on occaſion, we ſet our ſelves to do well, reflexion thereon will yield great ſatisfaction and pleaſure to us; we ſhall be glad that we have done, and that our task is over; we ſhall *enjoy our former life*; Our time which is ſo paſt will not yet be loſt unto us; but rather it will be moſt ſecurely ours, laid up beyond the reach of danger, in the repoſitory of a good conſcience.

Rom. 2.

9. Again, all our time of continuance in ſin we do *treaſure up wrath*, or accumulate guilt; and the larger our guilt is, the ſorer muſt be our repentance; the more bitter the ſorrow, the more low the humbling, the more earneſt the deprecation requiſite to obtain pardon: the broader and deeper the ſtain is, the more waſhing is needful to get it out; if we ſin much and long, we muſt grieve anſwerably, or we ſhall be no fit objects of mercy.

Quam magna deliquimus, tam graviter deflеamus, &c. Cypr. *de Lapſ.* Or. 5.

10. And whenever the ſin is pardoned, yet indelible marks and monuments thereof will abide. We ſhall eternally be obliged to cry *peccavi*; although the puniſhment may be remitted, the deſert of it cannot be removed; a ſcar from it will ſtick in our fleſh; which ever will deform us; a tang of it will ſtay in our memory, which always will be diſguſtful; we ſhall never reflect on our miſcarriages without ſome confuſion and horrour; inceſſantly we ſhall be liable to that queſtion of St. *Paul, What fruit had ye of thoſe things, whereof ye are now aſhamed?* If therefore we could reaſonably preſume, yea if we could certainly foreſee, that we ſhould hereafter in time repent, yet it were unadviſable to perſiſt in ſin, ſeeing it being once committed, can never be reverſed; never expunged from the regiſters of time, never daſhed our from the tables of our mind and memory; but will perpetually reſt as matter of doleful conſideration, and of tragical ſtory to us. *Then ſhalt thou remember thy ways, and be aſhamed. That thou mayſt remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more becauſe of thy ſhame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou haſt done, ſaith the Lord God: Then ſhall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and ſhall loath your ſelves in your own ſight, for your iniquities, and for your abominations.*

Pœna poteſt demi, culpa perennis erit. Ovid.

Ἡ συγχώρησις ἐμβύστο τῶν ἁμαρτημάτων τοῦ θεῦ, καὶ ἡ μνήμη τῶν συγχωρηθέντων ἁμαρτημάτων ἐκ ἠφανίζετο τοῦ Παύλῳ. Chryſ. *Tom.* 8. *p.* 97.

Rom. 6. 21.

Ezek. 16. 61.
Ezek. 16. 63.

Ezek. 36. 31.
20 43.

11. Again, ſo much time as we ſpend in diſobedience, ſo much of reward we do forfeit; for commenſurate to our works ſhall our rewards be; the fewer our good works are in the courſe of our preſent life, the ſmaller ſhall be the meaſures of joy, of glory, of felicity diſpenſed to us hereafter; the later conſequently we repent, the leſs we ſhall be happy: *One ſtar* (ſaith the *Apoſtle*) *differeth from another in glory*; and of all ſtars, thoſe in the celeſtial ſphere will ſhine brighteſt, who did ſoon riſe here, and continued long by the luſtre of their good works to glorify their heavenly Father; for *the path of the juſt is as the ſhining light, that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect day.* While therefore we let our intereſt lie dead by lingring, or run behind by ſinful practice, we are very bad husbands for our ſoul; our ſpiritual eſtate doth thereby hugely ſuffer; every minute contracteth a damage that runneth through millions of ages, and which therefore will amount to an immenſe ſum: And who for all the pleaſures here would forego one degree of bliſsful joy hereafter; who for all earthly ſplendours would exchange one ſpark of celeſtial glory; who for all the treaſures below would let ſlip one gem out of his heavenly crown?

1 Cor. 15. 41.

Prov. 4. 18.

12. Far-

12. Farther, let us conſider that whatever our age, whatever our condition or caſe be, the advice not to procraſtinate our obedience is very ſutable and uſeful.

Art thou young? then it is moſt proper to enter upon living well. For when we ſet out, we ſhould be put in a right way; when we begin to be Men, we ſhould begin to uſe our reaſon well; life and vertue ſhould be of the ſame ſtanding; what is more ugly than a Child, that hath learnt little, having learnt to do ill; than naughtineſs ſpringing up in that ſtate of innocence? the foundation of good life is to be laid in that age, upon which the reſt of our life is built; for this is the manner of our proceeding; the preſent dependeth always upon what is paſt; our practice is guided by notions that we had ſucked in, is ſwayed by inclinations that we got before; whence uſually our firſt judgments of things, and our firſt propenſions do ſtretch their influence upon the whole future life. *Train up a child in the way he ſhould go, and when he is old he will not depart from it,* ſaith the *Wiſe-man.*

Sub pædagogo cœperis licet, ſerum eſt. Mart. 8. 44.

Prov. 22. 6.

That age as it is moſt liable to be corrupted by vice, ſo it is moſt capable of being imbued with vertue: then nature is ſoft and pliable, ſo as eaſily to be moulded into any ſhape, ready to admit any ſtamp impreſſed thereon; then the mind is a pure table, in which good principles may be fairly engraven, without raſing out any former ill prejudices; then the heart being a ſoil free of weeds, the ſeeds of goodneſs being caſt therein will undiſturbedly grow and thrive; then the complexion being tender will eaſily be ſet into a right poſture; Our ſoul is then a Veſſel empty and ſweet; good liquour therefore may be inſtilled, which will both fit it, and ſeaſon it with a durable tincture; the extream curioſity and huge credulity of that age, as they greedily will ſwallow any, ſo will they admit good inſtruction. If we do then imbibe falſe conceptions, or have bad impreſſions made on our minds, it will be hard afterwards to expel, or to correct them. Paſſion is then very fluid and moveable, but not being impetuouſly determined any way, may eaſily be derived into the right chanel. Then the quickneſs of our wit, the briskneſs of our fancy, the freſhneſs of our memory, the vigour of our affections, the luſty and active mettle of our ſpirits being applied to vertuous ſtudies and endeavours, will produce moſt noble fruits; the beauty of which will adorn us, the ſweetneſs will pleaſe us, ſo as to leave on our minds a perpetual reliſh and ſatisfaction in goodneſs. Then being leſs encombred with the cares, leſs intangled in the perplexities, leſs expoſed to the temptations of the World and ſecular affairs, we can more eaſily ſet forth, we may proceed more expeditely in good courſes. Then being void of that ſtinging remorſe, which doth adhere to reflexions upon paſt follies, and miſpent time, with more courage and alacrity we may proſecute good undertakings; then beginning ſo ſoon to embrace vertue, we ſhall have advantage with more leiſure, and more eaſe to poliſh and perfect it through our enſuing courſe of life; ſetting out ſo early, in the very morning of our age, without much ſtraining, marching on ſoftly and fairly, we may go through our journey to happineſs.

Natura tenaciſſimi ſumus eorum, quæ rudibus annis percipimus, &c. Quint. 1. 1. *Difficilius eraditur quod rudis animi perbiberunt.* Hier. *ad* Lætam.

Ut corpora ad quoſdam membrorum flexus formari niſi tenera non poſſunt, ſic animos ad pleraque duriores robur ipſum facit. Quint. *ib.*

Quo ſemel eſt imbuta recens ſervabit odorem Teſta diu.

Hor. *Ep.* 1. 2.

Ἥδιον δὲ ὅτι χαλεπὸν ἡ νεότης, ὅτι δὲ εἰκαῖον, ὅτι δὲ ἐξαπάτητον, ὅτι δὲ ὀλίδον, καὶ σφοδρότερα δεῖ χαλινοῦ. Chryſ. ἀνδρ. α

Our actions then are the firſt fruits of our life, which therefore are fit and due ſacrifices to our Maker; which if we do withdraw, we ſhall

have nothing left ſo worthy or acceptable to preſent unto him; will it be ſeemly to offer him the dregs and refuſe of our age; ſhall we not be aſhamed to bring a crazy temper of body and ſoul, dry bones and decayed ſenſes; a dull fancy, a treacherous memory, a ſluggiſh ſpirit before him? ſhall we then when we are fit for little begin to undertake his ſervice? with our decrepit limbs and waſted ſtrength ſhall we ſet our ſelves to *run the ways of his commandments?*

As it is uncomfortable to think of being parſimonious, when our ſtock is almoſt gone; ſo it is to become thrifty of our life, when it comes near the bottom. Δεινὴ ἐνὶ πυθμενὶ φειδώ.

If we keep innocency, ſpend our youth well, it will yeild unexpreſſible comfort to us; it will ſave us much ſorrow, it will prevent many inconveniences to us: If we have ſpent it ill, it will yeild us great diſpleaſure, it will coſt us much pains; we ſhall be forced ſadly to bewail our folly and vanity therein; it will be bitter to ſee, that we muſt unlive our former life, and undoe all we have done; that we muſt renounce the Principles we have avowed, we muſt root out the habits we have planted, we muſt forſake the Paths which we have beaten and ſo long trode in, if ever we will be happy; it will be grievous to us, when we come with penitential regret to deprecate, *Lord remember not the ſins of my youth*; we ſhall feel ſore pain, when *our bones are full of the ſins of our youth*, and we come *to poſſeſs the iniquities thereof.*

Pſal. 37. 38.
Pſal. 25. 7.
Job 20. 11.
13. 26.

It is therefore *good* (as the *Prophet* ſaith) *that a man bear the yoke in his youth*, when his neck is tender; it is excellent advice which the *Preacher* giveth, *Remember thy Creatour in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, and the years draw nigh, when thou ſhalt ſay I have no pleaſure in them.*

Lam. 3. 27.
Fingit equum tenra docilem cervice Magiſter
Ire viam, quam monſtrat eques. — Hor.
Eccl. 12. 1.

Ariſtotle ſaith, that young men are not *fit hearers of moral doctrine*; becauſe (ſaith he) *they are unexperienced in affairs of life*; and *becauſe they are apt to follow their paſſions, which indiſpoſe to hear with fruit or profit*; but his concluſion is falſe, and his reaſons may be well turned againſt him; for becauſe young men want experience, therefore is there no bad prejudice, no contrary habit to obſtruct their embracing ſound doctrine; becauſe their paſſions are vehement and ſtrong, therefore being rightly ordered, and ſet upon good objects they with great force will carry them to vertuous practice; that indeed is the beſt time to regulate and tame Paſſions; as Horſes muſt be broken when they are Colts, Dogs muſt be made when they are Whelps, elſe they will never be brought to any thing. The *Poet* therefore adviſed better than the *Philoſopher*

Eth. 1. 3.
Τῆς πολιτικῆς ἐκ ὃν οἰκείῳ ἀκροατὴς ὁ νέος· ἄπειρος γὰρ πρᾶξεως βίου· ἔτι τοῖς παθεσιν ἀκολουθητικὸς ἀν ματαίως ἀκούσεται καὶ ἀνωφελῶς.

Hor. *Ep.* 1. 2.
— *nunc adhibe puro*
Pectore verba puer, nunc te melioribus offer;

and St. *Paul* plainly doth confute him, when he biddeth Parents to *educate their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*; when he chargeth *Titus*, that he *exhort young men to be ſober-minded*; when he commendeth *Timothy*, for that he had ἀπὸ βρέφους *from his infancy known the Holy Scriptures*; So doth the *Pſalmiſt*, when he ſaith, *Wherewith ſhall a young man cleanſe his way? by taking heed according to thy word.* And *Solomon*, when he declareth that his moral Precepts did ſerve *to give ſubtilty to the ſimple, to the young man knowledge and diſcretion*; when he biddeth us to *train up a child in the way he ſhould go*; St. *Peter* doth intimate the ſame, when he biddeth us, *as new born babes to deſire the ſincere milk of the word*; and our Saviour, when

Eph. 6. 4.
Tit. 2. 6.
2 Tim. 2. 22.
2 Tim. 3. 15.
Pſal. 119. 9.
Prov. 1. 4.
Prov. 22. 6, 15.
1 Pet. 2. 2.

when he ſaid, *Suffer little children to come unto me, for of ſuch is the kingdom of God*; that is the more ſimplicity and innocence a Man is endued with, the more apt he is to embrace and comply with the Evangelical Doctrine: *Ariſtotle* therefore was out, when he would exclude young men from the Schools of Vertue. It is obſervable that he contradicteth himſelf; for Οὐ μικρὸν διαφέρει τὸ ὅπως ἢ ὅπως, ἀλλὰ πάμπολυ, μᾶλλον δὲ τὸ πᾶν. *It is* (ſaith he) *of no ſmall concernment to be from youth accuſtomed thus or thus; yea 'tis very much, or rather all:* And how ſhall a young man be accuſtomed to do well, if he be not allowed to learn what is to be done? Luke 18. 16. Eth. 2. 2.

Again, are we old? it is then high time to begin; we have then leſs time to ſpare from our moſt important buſineſs; we ſtand then in moſt imminent danger, upon the edge of perdition, and ſhould therefore be nimble to skip out thence; our forces being diminiſhed, our quickneſs and induſtry ſhould be encreaſed; the later we ſet out, the more ſpeed it behoveth us to make. If we ſtay, we ſhall grow continually more indiſpoſed and unfit to amend; it will be too late, when utter decrepitneſs and dotage have ſeiſed upon us; and our body doth ſurvive our ſoul. When ſo much of our time, of our parts, of our ſtrength are fled, we ſhould husband the reſt to beſt advantage, and make the beſt ſatisfaction we can unto God, and unto our ſouls with the remainder.

Quod facere ſolent qui ſerius exeunt — calcar addamus. Sen. *Ep.* 68. 76. 10.

Apoc. 3. 2. Στήριξον τὰ λοιπὰ, ἃ μέλλει ἀποθανεῖν.

This age hath ſome peculiar advantages, which we ſhould embrace; the froth of humours is then boiled out, the fervours of luſt are ſlaked, paſſions are allayed, appetites are flatted; ſo that then inclinations to ſin are not ſo violent, nor doth the enjoyment thereof ſo much gratify.

——*non omnia grandior ætas*
Quæ fugiamus habet —— Ovid.

Ἡ μὲν γὰρ νεότης πολλὰς παρέχει τοῖς μανιώδεσι κυμάτων ἀγρίων, καὶ πνευμάτων χείμωνι πονηρῶν· ἡ δὲ πολιὰ ὥσπερ εἰς λιμένα ἀκύμαντον τὰς ἡμῶν γνώμας ἔχουσα ὁρμίζει ψυχὰς, παρέχουσα τῇ ὄντως ἡλικίᾳ ἐντρυφᾶν ἀσφαλείᾳ. Chryſ. *Tom.* 6. *Orat.* 38.

Long experience then hath diſcovered the vanity of all worldly things, and the miſchief of ill courſes; ſo that we can then hardly admire any thing, or be fond of enjoying what we have found unprofitable or hurtful.

Age is excuſed from compliance with the faſhions, and thence much exempted from temptations of the World; ſo that it may be good without obſtacle or oppoſition.

It is proper thereto to be grave and ſerious, and conſequently to be vertuous; for gravity without vertue and ſeriouſneſs about vain things are ridiculous.

Nothing doth ſo adorn this age as goodneſs, nothing doth ſo diſgrace it as wickedneſs; *The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteouſneſs*; but it is a mark of Infamy, if it be obſerved proceeding in a courſe of iniquity, it ſignifieth that experience hath not improved it, it argueth incorrigible folly, or rather incurable madneſs therein. Prov. 16. 31.

There is indeed no care, no employment proper for old Men but to prepare for their diſſolution; to be bidding adue to the World with its vain Pomps and miſchievous Pleaſures; to be packing up their Goods, to be caſting their Accompts, to be fitting themſelves to abide in that ſtate into which they are tumbling, to appear at that Bar, before which ſuddenly nature will ſet them. As a Ship, which hath long been toſt and weather-beaten, which is ſhattered in its timber, and hath loſt much of its rigging, ſhould do nothing in that caſe but work toward the Port, there to find its ſafety and eaſe; ſo ſhould a Man, who having paſt many

ſtorms

storms and agitations of the World is grievouſly battered and torn with Age, ſtrive onely to dye well, to get ſafe into the Harbour of eternal Reſt.

In freto viximus, moriamur in portu. Sen. *Ep.* 19.

In fine, *Epicurus* himſelf ſaid well, that *no man is either immature or over-ripe in regard to his ſouls health*; we can never ſet upon it too ſoon, we ſhould never think it too late to begin; to live well is always the beſt thing we can do, and therefore we ſhould at any time endeavour it; there are common reaſons for all ages, there are ſpecial reaſons for each age, which moſt ſtrongly and moſt clearly do urge it; it is moſt ſeaſonable for young Men, it is moſt neceſſary for old Men, it is moſt adviſeable for all Men *.

Οὔτ' ἄωρος ἡλικία ἐστὶν, οὔτε παρῳχημένος πρὸς τὸ κτᾶσθαι ψυχῆς ὑγίειαν. Epic. *ad* Menoec.

* *Quare juventus, imo omnis ætas* (*neque enim rectæ voluntati ſerum eſt tempus ullum*) *totis mentibus huc tendamus, in hoc elaboremus; forſan & conſummare contingat.* Quint. 12. 1.

Again, be our condition what it will, this advice is reaſonable: Are we in health? we owe God thanks for that excellent gift, and the beſt gratitude we can expreſs is the improving it for his ſervice and our own good; we ſhould not loſe the advantage of a ſeaſon ſo fit for our obedience and repentance; while the forces of our body and mind are entire, while we are not diſcompoſed by pain or faintneſs, we ſhould ſtrive to diſpatch this needful work, for which infirmity may diſable us.

Are we ſick? it is then time to conſider our frailty, and the beſt we can to obviate the worſt conſequences thereof: It is then very fit, when we do feel the ſad effects of ſin, to endeavour the prevention of worſe miſchiefs that may follow; it is ſeaſonable, when we lie under God's correcting hand to ſubmit unto him, to deprecate his wrath, to ſeek reconciliation with him by all kinds of obedience ſutable to that ſtate; with ſerious reſolutions to amend hereafter, if it ſhall pleaſe God to reſtore us; it is moſt adviſeable, when we are in the borders of death to provide for that ſtate, which lieth juſt beyond it.

Are we rich and proſperous? 'tis expedient then preſently to amend, leſt our Wealth do ſoon corrupt us with Pride, with Luxury, with Sloth, with Stupidity; leſt our Proſperity becometh an inevitable ſnare, an irrecoverable bane unto us.

Prov. 1. 32.

Are we poor or afflicted? it is then alſo needful to repent quickly; that we may have a comfortable ſupport for our ſoul, and a certain ſuccour in our diſtreſs; that we may get a treaſure to ſupply our want, a joy to drown our ſorrow; a buoy to keep our hearts from ſinking into deſperation and diſconſolateneſs. This condition is a medicine, which God adminiſtreth for our ſoul's health; if it do not work preſently ſo as to do us good, it will prove both grievous and hurtful to us.

13. Laſtly, we may conſider, that abating all the ruful conſequences of abiding in ſin, abſtracting from the deſperate hazards it expoſeth us to in regard to the future life, it is moſt reaſonable to abandon it, betaking our ſelves to a vertuous courſe of practice. For vertue in it ſelf is far more eligible than vice, to keep God's Commandments hath much greater convenience than to break them; the life of a good Man in all conſiderable reſpects is highly to be preferred above the life of a bad Man: for what is vertue, but a way of living that advanceth our nature into a ſimilitude with God's moſt excellent and happy nature; that promoteth our true beneft and intereſt; that procureth and preſerveth health, eaſe, ſafety, liberty, peace, comfortable

Eſt virtus nihil aliud quam in ſe perfecta, & ad ſummum perducta natura, Cic. *de Leg.* 1.

comfortable ſubſiſtence, fair repute, tranquillity of mind, all kinds of convenience to us? to what ends did our moſt benign and moſt wiſe Maker deſign and ſuit his Law, but to the furthering our good, and ſecuring us from miſchief, as not only himſelf hath declared, but reaſon ſheweth, and experience doth atteſt? What is vice but a ſort of practice which debaſeth and diſparageth us, which plungeth us into grievous evils, which bringeth diſtemper of body and ſoul, diſtreſs of fortune, danger, trouble, reproach, regret, and numberleſs inconveniences upon us; which for no other reaſon, than becauſe it ſo hurteth and grieveth us, was by our loving Creatour interdicted to us? Vertue is moſt noble and worthy, moſt lovely, moſt profitable, moſt pleaſant, moſt creditable; vice is moſt ſordid and baſe, ugly, hurtful, bitter, diſgraceful, in its ſelf, and in its conſequences. If we compare them together, we ſhall find, that vertue doth always preſerve our health, but vice commonly doth impair it; that vertue improveth our eſtate, vice waſteth it; that vertue adorneth our reputation, vice blemiſheth it; that vertue ſtrengthneth our parts, vice weakneth them; that vertue maintaineth our freedom, vice enſlaveth us; that vertue keepeth our mind in order and peace, vice diſcompoſeth and diſquieteth it; vertue breedeth ſatisfaction and joy, vice ſpawneth diſpleaſure and anguiſh of conſcience: to enter therefore into a vertuous courſe of life, what is it but to embrace happineſs, to continue in vitious practice, what is it but to ſtick in miſery?

Deut. 10. 13. Mic. 6. 8. Neh. 9. 13. Rom. 7. 12. Pſal. 19. 9. 119. 107.

By entring into good life, we enter into the favour and friendſhip of God, engaging his infinite power and wiſedom for our protection, our ſuccour, our direction and guidance; enjoying the ſweet effluxes of his mercy and bounty; we therewith become friends to the holy Angels, and bleſſed Saints, to all good Men, being united in a holy and happy conſortſhip of judgment, of charity, of hope, of devotion with them; we become friends to all the World, which we oblige by good wiſhes, and good deeds, and by the influence of good example; we become friends to our ſelves, whom we thereby enrich and adorn with the beſt goods; whom we gratify and pleaſe with the choiceſt delights: but perſiſting in ſin we continue to affront, wrong, and diſpleaſe our Maker, to be diſloyal toward our Sovereign Lord; to be ingrateful toward our chief Benefactour, to diſoblige the beſt Friend we have, to provoke a moſt juſt and ſevere judge; to cope with Omnipotency, to contradict Infallibility, to enrage the greateſt patience, to abuſe immenſe Goodneſs: We thereby become enemies to all the World, to God, whom we injure and diſhonour; to the friends of God, whom we deſert and oppoſe; to the creatures, which we abuſe to our pride, luſt and vanity; to our neighbours whom we corrupt, or ſeduce; to our ſelves, whom we bereave of the beſt goods, and betray to the worſt evils.

Beginning to live ſoberly, we begin to live like Men, following the conduct of reaſon; beginning to live in charity, we commence the life of Angels, enjoying in our ſelves moſt ſweet content, and procuring great benefit to others; but going on in ſinful voluptuouſneſs, we proceed to live like beaſts, wholly guided by ſenſe, and ſwayed by appetite; being pertinacious in malice we continue to be like fiends, working torment in our ſelves, and miſchief to our neighbours.

Embracing vertue we become wiſe and ſober Men, worthy and honourable, beneficial and uſeful to the World; but continuing in vice, we continue to be fooliſh and vain, to be vile and deſpicable, to be worthleſs and uſeleſs.

By

By our delay to amend, what do we gain? what, but a little flaſhy and tranſient pleaſure inſtead of a ſolid and durable peace; but a little counterfeit profit inſtead of real wealth; but a little ſmoak of deceitful opinion inſtead of unqueſtionable ſound honour; ſhadows of imaginary goods inſtead of thoſe which are moſt ſubſtantial and true, a good mind, the love of God, the aſſured welfare of our ſouls. But this field of diſcourſe is too ſpatious, I ſhall only therefore for concluſion ſay, that ſpeedily applying our ſelves to obedience, and breaking off our ſins by repentance, is in effect nothing elſe but from a preſent Hell in trouble, and the danger of a final Hell in torment to be tranſlated into a double Heaven; one of joyful tranquillity here, another of bliſsful reſt hereafter; unto the which Almighty God in his mercy bring us all, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord; to whom for ever be all glory and praiſe. *Amen.*

1 Theſſ. 5. 23. *The very God of peace ſanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole ſpirit, and ſoul, and body be preſerved blameleſs unto the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* Amen.

SERMON XVIII.

Of Induſtry in general.

ECCLES IX. 10.

Whatſoever thy hand findeth to doe, doe it with all thy might.

Rom. 21. 11. IN St. *Paul*'s Epiſtle to the *Romans*, among divers excellent rules of life, preſcribed by that great Maſter, this is one, Τῇ σπουδῇ μὴ ὀκνηροί. *Be not ſlothful in buſineſs*, or to buſineſs; And in the 2d. Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, among other principal vertues, or worthy accompliſhments, for *abounding* wherein the *Apoſtle* commendeth thoſe Chriſtians, he ranketh *all diligence*, or induſtry exerciſed in all affairs and duties incumbent on them: this is that vertue, the practice whereof in this moral Precept or advice the *Royal Preacher* doth recommend unto us; being indeed an eminent vertue, of very general uſe, and powerful influence upon the management of all our affairs, or in the conduct of our whole life.

Πᾶσα σπουδὴ. 2 Cor. 8. 7.

Induſtry, I ſay, in general touching all matters incident, which *our hand findeth to doe*, that is, which diſpenſation of Providence doth offer, or which choice of reaſon embraceth, for employing our active powers of ſoul and body, the *Wiſe-man* doth recommend; and to preſſing the obſervance of his advice (waving all curious remarks either *Critical* or *Logical* upon the words) I ſhall preſently apply my diſcourſe, propoſing divers

divers conſiderations apt to excite us thereto; onely firſt let me briefly deſcribe it, for our better apprehenſion of its true notion and nature.

By induſtry we underſtand a ſerious and ſteady application of mind, joined with a vigorous exerciſe of our active faculties in proſecution of any reaſonable, honeſt, uſeful deſign, in order to the accompliſhment, or attainment of ſome conſiderable good; as for inſtance, a *Merchant*, is induſtrious, who continueth intent and active in driving on his trade for acquiring Wealth; a *Souldier* is induſtrious, who is watchful for occaſion, and earneſt in action toward obtaining the victory; And a *Scholar* is induſtrious, who doth aſſiduouſly bend his mind to ſtudy for getting knowledge.

Induſtry doth not conſiſt merely in action; for that is inceſſant in all Perſons, our mind being a reſtleſs thing, never abiding in a total ceſſation from thought or from deſign (being like a Ship in the Sea, if not ſteered to ſome good purpoſe by reaſon, yet toſſed by the waves of fancy, or driven by the winds of temptation ſomewither) But the direction of our mind to ſome good end, without roving or flinching, in a ſtreight and ſteady courſe, drawing after it our active powers in execution thereof, doth conſtitute induſtry; the which therefore uſually is attended with labour and pain; for our mind (which naturally doth affect variety and liberty, being apt to loath familiar objects, and to be weary of any conſtraint) is not eaſily kept in a conſtant attention to the ſame thing; And the Spirits employed in thought are prone to flutter and fly away, ſo that it is hard to fix them; And the corporeal inſtruments of action being ſtrained to a high pitch, or detained in a tone will ſoon feel a laſſitude, ſomewhat offenſive to nature; Whence labour or pain is commonly reckoned an ingredient of induſtry; and laborioufneſs is a name ſignifying it; upon which accompt this vertue (as involving labour) deſerveth a peculiar commendation; it being then moſt laudable to follow the dictates of reaſon, when ſo doing is attended with difficulty and trouble.

Ἡ γὰρ ψυχὴ φύσιν ἔχουσα τὸ κινεῖσθαι διὰ παντὸς, ὅταν ἀνέχεται ἡσυχίαν, ἔμπρακτον τὸ ζῶον τοῦτο ἐποίησεν ὁ Θεὸς, &c. Chryſ. in Act. Or. 35.

Such in general I conceive to be the nature of induſtry; to the practice whereof the following conſiderations may induce.

1. We may conſider that induſtry doth befit the conſtitution and frame of our nature; all the faculties of our ſoul and organs of our body being adapted in a congruity and tendency thereto: Our hands are ſuited for work, our feet for travel, our ſenſes to watch for occaſion of purſuing good and eſchewing evil; our reaſon to plod and contrive ways of employing the other parts and powers; all theſe, I ſay, are formed for action; and that not in a looſe and gadding way, or in a ſlack and remiſs degree, but in regard to determinate ends, with vigour requiſite to attain them; and eſpecially our appetites do prompt to induſtry, as inclining to things not attainable without it; according to that Aphoriſm of the *Wiſeman*, Ἐπιθυμίαι ὀκνηρὸν ἀποκτείνουσιν —— *The deſire of the ſlothful killeth him, for his hands refuſe to labour*; that is, he is apt to deſire things which he cannot attain without pains; and not enduring them he for want thereof doth feel a deadly ſmart and anguiſh: Wherefore in not being induſtrious we defeat the intent of our Maker; we pervert his work and gifts; we forfeit the uſe and benefit of our faculties; we are bad husbands of natures ſtock. Prov. 21. 25. 13. 4.

2. In conſequence hereto induſtry doth preſerve and perfect our nature; keeping it in good tune and temper; improving and advancing it toward its beſt ſtate. The labour of our mind in attentive meditation and ſtudy

doth render it capable and patient of thinking upon any object or occaſion; doth poliſh and refine it by uſe, doth enlarge it by acceſſion of habits; doth quicken and rowſe our Spirits, dilating and diffuſing them into their proper chanels: The very labour of our body doth keep the organs of action ſound and clean, diſcuſſing fogs and ſuperfluous humours, opening paſſages, diſtributing nouriſhment, exciting vital heat: Barring the uſe of it, no good conſtitution of ſoul or body can ſubſiſt; but a foul ruſt, a dull numneſs, a reſty liſtleſneſs, a heavy unweildineſs muſt ſeiſe on us; our ſpirits will be ſtifled and choaked, our hearts will grow faint and languid, our parts will flag and decay; the vigour of our mind, and the health of our body will be much impaired.

Πάντα γὰρ ἡ ἀργία ἐλαττοῖ, καὶ τὰ μέλη σώματος αὐτά, &c. Chryſ. in Act. Orat. 25.

Πρῶτον μὲν γὰρ τηρεῖ τὸ σῶμα ἔκλυτον, &c. Ibid.

It is with us as with other things in nature, which by motion are preſerved in their native purity and perfection, in their ſweetneſs, in their luſtre, reſt corrupting, debaſing and defiling them; If the water runneth, it holdeth clear, ſweet and freſh; but ſtagnation turneth it into a noiſome puddle; If the air be fanned by winds, it is pure and wholſome, but from being ſhut up it groweth thick and putrid; If metals be employed, they abide ſmooth and ſplendid; but lay them up, and they ſoon contract ruſt; If the earth be laboured with culture, it yeildeth corn; but lying neglected, it will be overgrown with brakes and thiſtles; and the better its ſoil is, the ranker weeds it will produce; all nature is upheld in its being, order and ſtate by conſtant agitation; every creature is inceſſantly employed in action conformable to its deſigned end and uſe; In like manner the preſervation and improvement of our faculties depends on their conſtant exercile.

Ποῖος ἵππος χρήσιμος, ὁ τρυφῶν, ἢ ὁ ἐργαζόμενος; ποία ναῦς, ἡ πλέουσα, ἢ ἡ ἀργοῦσα; ποῖον ὕδωρ, τὸ τρέχον, ἢ τὸ ἑστὼς; ποῖος σίδηρος, ὁ κείμενος, ἢ ὁ ἐργαζόμενος, &c. Chryſ. ibid.

Neglectis urenda filix innaſcitur agris. Hor. *Serm.* 1. 3.

Plut. περὶ παιδ. p. 3.

3. As we naturally were compoſed, ſo by divine appointment we were originally deſigned for induſtry; God did not intend that Man ſhould live idly even in his beſt ſtate; or ſhould enjoy happineſs without taking pains; but did provide work enough even in Paradiſe it ſelf; for *The* Lord God *(*ſaith the *Text) took man, and put him into the garden of* Gen. 2. 15. *Eden to dreſs it, and to keep it,* ſo that had we continued happy, we muſt have been ever buſie, by our induſtry ſuſtaining our life, and ſecuring our pleaſure; otherwiſe Weeds might have overgrown Paradiſe, and that of *Solomon* might have been applicable to *Adam, I went by the field of the* Prov. 24. 30, 31. *ſlothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of underſtanding, and loe it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof.*

4. By our tranſgreſſion and fall the neceſſity of induſtry (together with a difficulty of obtaining good, and avoiding evil) was encreaſed to us; being ordained both as a juſt puniſhment for our offences, and as an expedient remedy of our needs: For thereupon *the ground was curſed to bring* Gen. 3. 17--- *forth thorns and thiſtles to us,* and it was our doom pronounced by God's own mouth, *In the ſweat of thy face ſhalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground*; ſo that now labour is fatally natural to us; now *Man* (as *Job* Job 5. 7. ſaith) *is born to labour as the ſparks fly upward* (or *as the Vultur's chickens* Ἀλλ' ἄνθρωπος γεννᾶται κόπῳ· νεοσσοὶ ἡ γυπὸς ὑψηλὰ πέτονται. LXX. Interp. *ſoar aloft,* according to the *Greek* Interpreters.)

Now great travel (*as the Son of* Sirach *ſaith*) is created for every man; (ἀ πολία μεγάλη ἔκτισται παντὶ ἀνθρώπῳ, &c. Eccluſ 40. 1.) and an heavy yoke is upon the ſons of Adam, &c.

5. According

5. Accordingly our condition and circumſtances in the World are ſo ordered, as to require induſtry; ſo that without it we cannot ſupport our life in any comfort or convenience; whence St. *Paul*'s charge upon the *Theſſalonians*, that *If any one would not work, neither ſhould he eat*, is in a manner a general law impoſed on mankind by the exigency of our ſtate, according to that of *Solomon*; *The idle ſoul ſhall ſuffer hunger*, and, *The ſluggard who will not plow by reaſon of the cold, ſhall beg in harveſt, and have nothing.* 2 Theſſ. 3. 10. Prov. 19. 15. Prov. 20. 4.

Of all our many neceſſities none can be ſupplied without pains, wherein all men are obliged to bear a ſhare; Every man is to work for his food, for his apparel, for all his accommodations, either immediately and directly, or by commutation and equivalence; for the *Gentleman* himſelf cannot (at leaſt worthily, and inculpably) obtain them otherwiſe, than by redeeming them from the Plowman, and the Artificer by compenſation of other cares and pains, conducible to publick good.

The wiſe *Poet* did obſerve well, when he ſaid,

——*Pater ipſe colendi*
Haud facilem eſſe viam voluit—— Virg. *Georg.* 1.

and St. *Chryſoſtome* doth propoſe the ſame obſervation, that God to whet our mind, and keep us from moping, would not that we ſhould eaſily come by the fruits of the earth, without employing much art and many pains; in order thereto there muſt be skill uſed in obſerving ſeaſons, and preparing the ground; there muſt be labour ſpent in manuring, in delving and plowing, in ſowing, in weeding, in fencing it; there muſt be pains taken in reaping, in gathering, in laying up, in threſhing, and dreſſing the fruit e'er we can enjoy it: So much induſtry is needful to get Bread; and if we liſt to fare more daintily, we muſt either hunt for it, uſing craft and toil to catch it out of the woods, the water, the air; or we muſt carefully wait on thoſe creatures, of which we would ſerve our ſelves, feeding them that they may feed us; ſuch induſtry is required to preſerve mankind from ſtarving. And to guard it from other inconveniences, miſchiefs and dangers ſurrounding us, it is no leſs requiſite: for to ſhelter us from impreſſions of weather, we muſt ſpin, we muſt weave, we muſt build; and in order thereto we muſt ſcrape into the bowels of the earth to find our tools, we muſt ſweat at the Anvil to forge them for our uſe; we muſt frame Arms to defend our ſafety, and our ſtore from the aſſaults of wild beaſts, or of more dangerous Neighbours, wild men. To furniſh accommodations for our curioſity and pleaſure, or to provide for the convenience and ornament of our life, ſtill greater meaſures of induſtry are demanded; to ſatisfy thoſe intents a thouſand contrivances of art, a thouſand ways of trade and buſineſs do ſerve, without which they are not attainable. In whatever condition any man is, in what ſtate ſoever he be placed, whatſoever calling or way of life he doth embrace, ſome peculiar buſineſs is thence impoſed on him, which he cannot with any advantage or good ſucceſs, with any grace, with any comfort to himſelf, or ſatisfaction to others manage without competent induſtry; nothing will go on of it ſelf, without our care to direct it, and our pains to hold it, and forward it in the right courſe: All which things ſhew, that Divine Wiſedom did intend, that we ſhould live in the exerciſe of induſtry, or not well without it; having ſo many needs to be ſupplied, ſo many deſires to be ap-

——*curis acuens mortalia corda;*
Nec torpere gravi paſſus ſua regna veterno.
Virg. *Ibid.*

Διὰ τοῦτο εἰς ἀνάγκλιτον κατέστησεν ἐργασίας ὁ Θεὸς. &c. Chryſoſt. *in* Act. *Hom.* 35.

peaſed thereby; being expoſed to ſo many troubles and difficulties, from which we cannot extricate our ſelves without it. But farther yet,

6. Let us conſider, that induſtry hath annexed thereto, by divine appointment and promiſe, the faireſt fruits, and the richeſt rewards: All good things (being either ſuch in themſelves, or made ſuch by humane eſteem) are the fruits of induſtry; ordered to ſprout from it, under the protection, and influence of God's bleſſing, which commonly doth attend it.

All good things indeed are the gift of God, and freely diſpenſed by his hand; but he doth not give them abſolutely without condition, nor miraculouſly without concurrence of ordinary means; By ſupporting our active powers, and ſupplying needful aid to our endeavours; by directing and upholding us in the courſe of our action; by preventing or removing obſtacles that might croſs us; by granting that final ſucceſs, which dependeth on his pleaſure, he doth confer them on us; Our hand commonly is God's hand, by which he worketh good, and reacheth out benefits to us; governing and wielding it as he pleaſeth.

Pſ. 37. 3, 23. Prov. 3. 6.

Dii laboribus omnia vendunt. Jud. 6. 35. 7. 7. 2 Kings 5. 2: Joſh. 1. 7, 9.

God indeed could not well proceed otherwiſe in diſpenſing his favours to us; not well, I ſay; that is, not without ſubverting the method of things which himſelf hath eſtabliſhed; not without ſlighting and voiding his own firſt bounty, or rendring the common gifts of nature (our reaſon, our ſenſes, our active powers) vain and uſeleſs; not without making us uncapable of any praiſe, or any reward, which ſuppoſe works atchieved by our earneſt endeavour; not without depriving us of that ſweeteſt content, which ſpringeth from enjoying the fruit of our labour.

Καὶ πῶς ἔμελλες λαμβάνειν ἅμισθον, εἰ τὸ πᾶν ἔμελλεν ἔσεσθαι τοῦ Θεοῦ Chryſ. *in* Eph. *Orat.* 2.

Hence it is, that whatever in holy Scripture is called the gift of God, is otherwhile affirmed to be the effect of induſtry; it being the uſeful condition upon which, and the inſtrument whereby divine providence conveyeth good things to us: What God ſaid to *Joſhua*, doth imply the general method of his proceeding, *Onely be thou ſtrong and courageous — that thou mayſt proſper whitherſoever thou goeſt.*

Περὶ ἐκείνα μᾶλλον ἡ ψυχὴ διάκειται, ὑπὲρ ὧν ἔχαμε· διὰ τοῦτο καὶ πόνους ἀνέμιξεν ἀρετὴ οἰκειοῦσθαι σπεύδων ταύτῃ βελόμενος. Chryſ. *in* Joh. *Or.* 36.

Διὰ τοῦτο δὲ τὸ πᾶν ἑαυτοῦ ἐποίησεν, ἀλλ' ἀφῆκέ πι ἐφ' ἡμῖν εἶναι ἵνα δι' ἡμῶν λάβῃ τὰ ἐφάσπτα τοῦ δικαίως ἡμᾶς στεφανῶν. Chryſ. *Tom. Or.* 28.

Joſh. 1. 7.——

Hence whatever we are directed to pray for, we are alſo exhorted to work for; declaring thereby, that we are ſerious in our devotion, and do not mock God, asking that of him, which we deem not worth our pains to acquire; It was well ſaid of *Cato* in *Saluſt*; *Vigilando, agendo, conſulendo proſpere omnia cedunt, ubi ſocordiæ te atque ignaviæ tradideris, nequicquam Deos implores, irati infeſtique ſunt.* We are bid to pray even for our daily bread, yet we may ſtarve if we do not work for it; and in St. *Paul*'s judgment deſerve to do ſo.

Αὐτός τι νῦν ἀρῶν εἶτα τοὺς θεοὺς καλεῖ Cato *apud* Sall. *in bello Catil.*

Τὰν χεῖρα ποπφέροντα δεῖ τὰν τύχαν ἐπικαλεῖν Plut. *Apoph.* Lac.

Hence we are bound to thank God for all thoſe things, for the want of which we muſt thank our ſelves, and condemn our own ſloth.

Hence although we ſhould caſt our care on God, and relye on his providence: being ſolicitous for nothing; yet we muſt not ſo truſt him, as to tempt him, by neglecting the means, which he doth offer, of relieving our ſelves; to be preſumptuouſly ſlothful being no leſs blameable, than to be diſtruſtfully careful.

Hence God in all ſuch caſes, when we do need any good thing, is ſaid to be our helper and ſuccourer to the obtaining it; which doth imply that we muſt co-operate with him; and join our forces to thoſe, which He doth afford; ſo that as we can do nothing without him, ſo he will do nothing

nothing without us; yea so that sometime we are said also to help God; *Curse ye Meroz, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord; to the help of the Lord against the mighty,* If ever God doth perform all, without humane labour conspiring, it is onely in behalf of those, who are ready to do their best, but unable to do any thing, being overpowered by the insuperable difficulty of things; But He never doth act miracles, or controll nature, he never doth stretch forth his arm, or interpose special power in favour of wilful and affected sluggards. Jud. 5. 13. Psal. 72. 12. 22. 11. 2 Cor. 12. 10. 2 Chron. 14. 11. 1 Sam. 14. 6.

In fine, it is very plain both in common experience, declaring the course of Providence, and in Holy Scripture, expressing God's intention, that Almighty God doth hold forth all good things as the prizes and recompences of our vigilant care, and painful endeavour; as by surveying particulars we may clearly discern.

Nothing is more grateful to Men, than *prosperous success* in their undertakings, whereby they attain their ends, satisfy their desires, save their pains, and come off with credit; this commonly is the effect of industry, (which commandeth fortune, to which all things submit and serve) and scarce ever is found without it; An industrious Person, who as such is not apt to attempt things impossible or unpracticable, can hardly fail of compassing his designs, because he will apply all means requisite, and bend all his forces thereto; striving to break through all difficulties, and to subdue all oppositions thwarting his purposes: But nothing of worth or weight, can be atchieved with half a mind, with a faint heart, with a lame endeavour; Any enterprize undertaken without resolution, managed without care, prosecuted without vigour will easily be dashed and prove abortive, ending in disappointment, damage, disgrace and dissatisfaction; so the *Wise-man* doth assure us; *The soul* (saith he) *of the sluggard desireth and hath nothing, but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat*; the one pineth away with ineffectual and fruitless desires; the other thriveth upon satisfaction in prosperous success. Prov. 13. 4. 21. 25.

Τῆς ὀκνηρείας πάντα δύσκολα γίγνεται Antiph.

Quodcunque imperavit sibi animus, obtinuit, &c. Sen. *de Ir.* 2. 12.

Plentiful accommodations for our sustenance and convenience all Men will agree to be very desireable; and these are indeed the blessings of him, who *visiteth the earth and inricheth it*; who *crowneth the year with his goodness*; and *whose clouds drop fatness*; but they are so dispensed by Heaven, that industry must concur therewith in deriving them to us, and sloth will debar us of them; for *He* (saith the Holy Oracle) *that tilleth his Land, shall be satisfied with bread*; and *the thoughts of the diligent alone tend to plenteousness*; but *The sluggard shall beg in harvest, and have nothing*; and *The idle soul shall suffer hunger*. Prov. 15. 30. Ps. 65. 9, 11. Gen. 21. 28. Prov. 21. 11. Prov. 21. 5. (*deest in* LXX) Prov. 20. 4. Prov. 19. 15.

Wealth is that, which generally Men of all things are wont to affect and covet with most ardent desire, as the great store-house of their needs and conveniences, the sure bulwark of their state and dignity; the universal instrument of compassing their designs and pleasures; And most evident it is, that in the natural course of things industry is the way to acquire it, to secure it, to improve and enlarge it; the which course persued innocently and modestly, God will be so far from obstructing, that he will further and bless it; for that indeed it would be a flaw in providence, if honest industry, using the means it affordeth, should fail of procuring a competency; which joined with a pious contentedness in St. *Paul*'s computation is *great wealth*. Wherefore although *Solomon* telleth us, that *the blessing of the Lord is that which maketh rich*; yet doth he not forget 1 Tim. 6. 6. Prov. 15. 16.

Prov. 10. 22. 22. 4. 2 Chron. 29. 12. Eccles 5. 19. Prov. 10. 4. 13. 11. Eccles 6. 1, 2. St. *Paul* exhorteth to *work with our hands*, ἵνα μεδενὸς χρείαν ἔχωμεν. 1 Theſſ. 4. 12. Prov. 23. 21. Prov. 18. 9. Prov. 10. 4. Prov. 6. 11. 24. 32.

forget or contradict himſelf, when he alſo doth affirm, that *The hand of the diligent maketh rich*; and that *He who gathereth by labour ſhall encreaſe*; becauſe God bleſſeth the induſtrious, and by his own hand, as the moſt proper inſtrument, maketh him rich; when the *Preacher* ſaid, *There is a man, to whom God hath given riches and wealth*, he knew well enough what Man it was, to whom God giveth them, and that ſluggards were not fit objects of that liberality; for he had obſerved it to be their doom to be poor and beggarly, their nature to waſt and imbezil an eſtate; He could aſſure us, that *drowſineſs ſhall cloath a man with rags*; He could propound it as a certain obſervation, that *He who is ſlothful in his work, is brother to a great waſter*; or that want of induſtry in our buſineſs will no leſs impair our eſtate, than prodigality it ſelf; He could more than once warn the ſlothful, that if he did *ſleep on*, or perſiſt in his ſluggiſh way, indigency would ſurprize and ſeize on him with an inſupportable violence; *So* (ſaith he) *ſhall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.*

1 Chron. 29. 11. Dan. 5. 18. Eccles 5. 19. Prov. 22. 29. Prov. 12. 24. Prov. 27. 18. Ὃς φυλάσσει τὴν ἑαυτοῦ κυρίου, τιμηθήσεται. Prov. 12. 24.

Another Darling of humane affection (and a Jewel indeed of conſiderable worth and uſe in our life) is *honour*, or reputation among Men: This alſo plainly, after the common reaſon and courſe of things, is purchaſed and preſerved by induſtry; For he that aſpireth to worthy things, and aſſayeth laudable deſigns, purſuing them ſteadily with ſerious application of heart, and reſolute activity, will rarely fail of good ſucceſs, and conſequently will not miſs honour, which ever doth crown victory; And if he ſhould hap to fail in his deſign, yet he will not loſe his credit; for having meant well, and done his beſt, all will be ready to excuſe, many to commend him; The very qualities which induſtry doth exerciſe, and the effects which it doth produce, do beget honour; as being ornaments of our Perſon and ſtate. God himſelf, (from whom *honour cometh*, and whoſe ſpecial Prerogative it is to beſtow it, he, as King of the World, being the fountain of honour) will be concerned to dignify an induſtrious management of his gifts with that natural and proper recompence thereof; conducting him, who fairly treadeth in the path of honour, that he ſhall ſafely arrive unto it. It is therefore a matter of eaſie obſervation which the wiſe *Prince* doth prompt us to mark; *Seeſt thou a man diligent in his buſineſs, he ſhall ſtand before kings, he ſhall not ſtand before mean men*; that is, diligence, as it is the faireſt, ſo it is the ſureſt way to the beſt preferment; as it qualifieth a Man for employment, and rendereth him uſeful to the World, ſo it will procure worthy employment for him, and attract the World to him; as the ſame great Authour again doth aſſert; *The hand*, ſaith he, *of the diligent ſhall bear rule*; Yea, ſo honourable a thing is induſtry it ſelf; that an exerciſe thereof in the meaneſt rank is productive of eſteem, as the *Wiſe-man* again doth obſerve and tell us; *He that waiteth on his maſter* (that is with diligence attendeth on the buſineſs committed to him) *ſhall be honoured.*

No induſtrious Man is contemptible; for he is ever looked upon as being in a way of thriving, of working himſelf out from any ſtraits, of advancing himſelf into a better condition. But without induſtry we cannot expect any thing, but diſreſpect, ſhame and reproach, which are the certain portion of the ſlothful; he not having the heart to enterprize, or the reſolution and patience to atchieve any thing, deſerving regard, or apt to procure it; he wanting all the ornaments, and good fruits that grow from induſtry; he being onely fit for a ſordid, and ſervile condition; whence *the ſlothful* (ſaith *Solomon*) *ſhall be under tribute*; and, *He that*

ſleepeth

ſleepeth in harveſt, is a ſon that cauſeth ſhame; He cauſeth it to his relations by his beggarly accoutrements, he cauſeth it much more to himſelf, by his deſpicable faultineſs, and by the diſgraceful conſequences of it. Δόλιοι δ' ἔσονται ἐν ὠφελιμῃ. Prov. 10. 5.

Another yet more pretious good, far ſurpaſſing all external advantages of our ſtate; the which in the judgment of him who (together with it having a full poſſeſſion of all ſecular proſperity, wealth, dignity and power) was beſt able to prize it, *is better than rubies, and incomparably doth excel all things, that may be deſired*, as ennobling, enriching and embeliſhing our better part; *Wiſedom*, I mean, or a good comprehenſion, and right judgment about matters of higheſt importance to us, is the prize of induſtry, and not to be gained without it; Nature conferreth little thereto, fortune contributeth much leſs; it cannot be bought at any rate; *It cannot* (ſaith *Job*) *be gotten for gold, neither ſhall ſilver be weighed for the price thereof*; *It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the pretious Onyx, or the Sapphire*; it is the off-ſpring of watchful obſervation and experience, of ſerious meditation and ſtudy; of careful reflexion on things, marking, comparing and weighing their nature, their worth, their tendencies and conſequences; theſe are needful to the getting of wiſedom, becauſe truth which it ſeeketh commonly doth not lye in the ſurface, obvious to a ſuperficial glance, nor only dependeth on a ſimple conſideration of few things; but is lodged deep in the bowels of things, and under a knotty complication of various matters; ſo that we muſt dig to come at it, and labour in unfolding it; Nor is it an eaſie task to void the prejudices ſpringing from inclination or temper, from education or cuſtome, from paſſion and intereſt, which cloud the mind, and obſtruct the attainment of wiſedom. Prov. 8. 11. 3. 14, 15. 4. 7. Job 28. 18. *Nec rude quid proſit video ingenium.* Hor. *de Art.* Job 28. 15---

If we will have it, we muſt get it as *Solomon* himſelf did, that great Maſter of it; how was that? *I gave*, ſaith he, *my heart to know wiſedom*: He, who made it his option and choice before all things; who ſo earneſtly and ſo happily did pray for it; upon whom it is ſo expreſly ſaid, that God in a ſpecial manner, and plentiful meaſure did beſtow it; who averreth God to be the ſole Donour of it (for, *The Lord*, ſaith he, *giveth wiſdom, out of his mouth cometh knowledge and underſtanding*) yet even he, did firſt give his heart to it, before it was given into his heart: He did not only gape for it, to receive it by mere infuſion; but he worked and ſtudied hard for it: He was indeed a great Student, an inquiſitive Searcher into Nature, a curious Obſerver of the World, a profound Conſiderer and Comparer of things; and by that induſtrious courſe, promoted by divine bleſſing, he did arrive to that great ſtock of ſo renowned a wiſedom. Eccles 1. 17. 2. 3. 1 Kings 3. 9. 4. 29. Sap 8. 21. 9. 17. Eccles 2. 26. Jam. 1. 5. Prov. 2. 6.

And the ſame method it is, which he preſcribeth to us for getting it; exhorting us, that we *incline our ear unto wiſedom, and apply our heart to underſtanding*; that we *cry after knowledge, and lift up our voice for underſtanding*; that we *ſeek her as ſilver, and ſearch for her, as for hid treaſures*; in following which courſe he doth aſſure us of good ſucceſs,; for *then* (ſaith he) *ſhalt thou underſtand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God*, which is *the head* or chief part, *of wiſedom*; And *Bleſſed* (ſaith he again, in the perſon and place of wiſedom it ſelf) *is the man, that heareth me, watching dayly at my gates, waiting at the poſts of my doors; for he that findeth me findeth life, and ſhall obtain favour of the Lord*; It is the way, he ſuppoſeth of finding wiſedom, to watch aſſiduouſly, to wait diligently upon the means of attaining her; and how infallible the acquiſt of her is thereby, ſhe doth again by his mouth thus acquaint us; *I love them that love* Prov. 22, 3, 4. 1. 5. Prov. 2. 5. Prov. 8. 34. Prov. 8. 17.

love me, and thoſe that ſeek me early ſhall find me; and *She* (ſaith his *imitatour*) *is eaſily ſeen of them that love her, and found of ſuch as ſeek her*; *whoſo ſeeketh her early, ſhall have no great travel, for he ſhall find her ſitting at his doors.*

Sap. 6. 12, 13, 14.

This indeed is the onely way; idleneſs is not capable of ſo rich and noble a purchaſe; a ſlothful perſon may be conceited (yea needs muſt be ſo) but he can never be wiſe; *A ſluggard* (ſaith *Solomon*) *is wiſer in his own conceit, than ſeven men that can render a reaſon*; this conceit of wiſedom is a natural iſſue of his ignorance; and 'tis indeed no ſmall part of his folly, that he doth not perceive it; being no leſs ſtupid in reflexion on his own mind, than in conſidering other matters; Being always in a ſlumber, he will often fall into ſuch pleaſant dreams; and no wonder that he ſhould preſume upon abundance of knowledge, who not liſting to take any pains in the ſearch or diſcuſſion of things, doth ſnatch the firſt appearances, doth embrace every ſuggeſtion of his fancy, every conceit gratifying his humour, for truth.

Prov. 26. 16.

What ſhould I ſpeak of *learning*, or the knowledge of various things, tranſcending vulgar apprehenſion? who knoweth not that we cannot otherwiſe reach any part of that than by aſſiduous ſtudy and contemplation? who doth not find that all the power in the World is not able to command, nor all the wealth of the *Indies* to purchaſe one notion? who can be ignorant, that no wit alone, or ſtrength of parts can ſuffice, without great induſtry to frame any ſcience, to learn any one tongue, to know the hiſtory of nature, or of providence: It is certainly by *Horace*'s method,

Qui cupit optatam curſu contingere metam, Multa tulit, fecitque puer, ſudavit & alſit.

Multa tulit, fecitque puer, ——

Hor. *de Art.*

by much exerciſe and endurance of pains, that any one can arrive to the mark of being learned or skilful in any ſort of knowledge.

Τῇ μὲν κακίᾳ ῥᾴδιον ἡδονὴ, τῇ δ' ἀρετῇ συγκαλήσωμαι πόνος. Chryſ. in Joh. *Or.* 36.

Κακία μὲν γὰρ αὐτοδίδακτον· ἀρετὴ δὲ σὺν πόνῳ κτᾶται Syn. *de Provid.* 2.

But farther yet, *Vertue*, the nobleſt endowment, and richeſt poſſeſſion whereof Man is capable; the glory of our nature, the beauty of our ſoul, the goodlieſt ornament, and the firmeſt ſupport of our life; that alſo is the fruit and bleſſing of induſtry; that of all things moſt indiſpenſably doth need and require it. It doth not grow in us by nature, nor befal us by fortune; for nature is ſo far from producing it, that it yeildeth mighty obſtacles and reſiſtences to its birth, there being in the beſt diſpoſitions much averſeneſs from good, and great proneneſs to evil; Fortune doth not further its acquiſts, but caſteth in rubs and hindrances thereto, every condition preſenting its allurements, or its affrightments from it; all things within us, and about us conſpire to render its production, and its practice laborious.

It is ('tis true) a gift of Heaven, and cannot be obtained without a ſpecial influence of Divine grace, but it is given as children are (of whom it is ſaid, *Loe children are an heritage of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is his reward*) not without ſore travel and labour of the mother, not without grievous difficulty and pangs in the birth: In our converſion to embrace vertue God doth guide us; but to what? to ſit ſtill; no, to walk, to run in his ways; Grace doth move us, but whereto? to do nothing; no, but to ſtir, and act vigorouſly; *The holy Spirit doth help our infirmities*; but how could it help them, if we did not conjoin our beſt (though weak) endeavours with its operations? to what doth it συναντιλαμβάνεται, or *co-help* us, but *to ſtrive againſt ſin, to work righteouſneſs*, to perform

Pſal. 127. 3.

Rom. 8. 26. συναντιλαμβάνεται. Heb. 12. 4. Rom. 2. 10. Act. 10. 35.

form duty with earneſt intention of mind, and laborious activity? *God* (ſaith St. *Chryſoſtome*) *hath parted vertue with us, and neither hath left all to be in us, leſt we ſhould be elated to pride, nor himſelf hath taken all, leſt we ſhould decline to ſloth* *.

Ἐμερίσατο ἐξ ἡμᾶς πολὺ ἀρετὴν ὁ Θεὸς, καὶ ἔτε ἐφ' ἡμῖν ἀφῆκατο πᾶν εἶναι, ἵνα μὴ εἰς ὄγκον ἐμπέσωμεν, ἔτε αὐτὸς τὸ πᾶν ἔλαβεν· ἵνα μὴ εἰς ῥᾳθυμίαν ἐκκλίνωμεν· ἀλλ', &c. Chryſ. *Hom.* 5. *Or.* 28.

* Οὐδὲ γὰρ ἦν ἐκεῖ τὰ καλὰ ἔργα ἀνθρώπων ἐγχείρησις πολλὰ καὶ ἄνωθεν βοηθείας τελειωθήσεται· οὐδὲ ἦν ἄνωθεν χάρις ὅπου τὸ μὴ σπουδάζοντα παραγένοιτ' ἄν, ἀλλ' ἐκάτερα συγκεκραμένης πρόσκειται, σπουδῶντι ἀνθρωπίνῳ, καὶ τῷ διὰ πίστεως ἄνωθεν χαρήκασαν συμμαχίαν εἰς τελείωσιν ἀρετῆς. Bas. *Conſt. Mon. cap.* 15.

Indeed the very nature and eſſence of vertue doth conſiſt in the moſt difficult and painful efforts of ſoul; in the extirpating rooted prejudices and notions from our underſtanding; in bending a ſtiff will, and rectifying crooked inclinations; in over-ruling a rebellious temper; in curbing eager and importunate appetites; in taming wild paſſions; in withſtanding violent temptations; in ſurmounting many difficulties, and ſuſtaining many troubles; in ſtrugling with various unruly luſts within, and encountring many ſtout enemies abroad, which aſſault our reaſon, and *war againſt our ſoul*: In ſuch exerciſes its very being lieth; its birth, its growth, its ſubſiſtence dependeth on them; ſo that from any diſcontinuance or remiſſion of them it would ſoon decay, languiſh away, and periſh.

What attention, what circumſpection, and vigilancy of mind, what intention of ſpirit, what force of reſolution, what command and care over our ſelves doth it require, to keep our hearts from vain thoughts, and evil deſires; to guard our tongue from wanton, unjuſt, uncharitable diſcourſe; to order our ſteps uprightly and ſteadily in all the paths of duty? καὶ τί οὐκ ὀπίπονον ἔχει τὴν ἀρετήν; *and what* (as *St. Chryſoſtome* asketh) *of all things belonging to vertue is not laborious?* It is no ſmall task to know it, wherein it conſiſteth, and what is demanded of us; it is a far more painful thing to conform our practice unto its rules and dictates. Chryſ. *in* Joh. *Or.* 36.

If travelling in a rough Way; if climbing up a ſteep Hill; if combating ſtern Foes, and fiighting ſharp Battels; if croſſing the grain of our nature and deſires; if continually holding a ſtrict rein over all our parts and powers, be things of labour and trouble, then greatly ſuch is the practice of vertue.

Τῆς ἀρετῆς ἱδρῶτα θεοὶ προπάροιθεν ἔθηκαν
Ἀθάνατοι, μακρὸς δὲ καὶ ὄρθιος οἶμος ἐπ' αὐτὴν
Καὶ τρηχὺς —— Heſ. Ἔργ. α.

Indeed each vertue hath its peculiar difficulty, needing much labour to maſter it: *Faith* is called ἔργον πίστεως, *the work of faith*, and it is no ſuch eaſie work, as may be imagined, to bring our hearts unto a thorough perſwaſion about truths croſſing our ſenſual conceits, and controlling our peeviſh humours; unto a perfect ſubmiſſion of our underſtanding, and reſignation of our will to whatever God teacheth or preſcribeth; to a firm reſolution of adhering to that profeſſion, which exacteth of us ſo much pains, and expoſeth us to ſo many troubles. 1 Theſſ. 1. 3. 2 Theſſ. 1. 11. John 6. 29.

Charity is alſo a laborious exerciſe of many good works, and he that will practiſe it muſt in divers ways labour hardly; He muſt labour in voiding from his ſoul many diſpoſitions deeply radicated therein by nature, opinion and cuſtome (envy, frowardneſs, ſtubbornneſs, perverſe and vain ſelfiſhneſs, from whence wrath, revenge, ſpite and malice do ſpring forth;) He muſt labour in effectual performance of all good Offices, and in catching all occaſions of doing good; He muſt exert that κόπον ἀγάπης, that *labour of love*, whereof St. *Paul* doth ſpeak; He muſt (as that holy *Apoſtle* directeth Gal. 6. 10. 1 Theſſ. 1. 3. Heb. 6. 10.

Eph. 4. 28. Act. 20. 35. recteth, not onely in precept, but by his own practice) work with his own hands, that he may ſupply the wants of his neighbour.

Ἀκλὶς ἡ. Heb. 10. 23. Heb. 6. 19. 1 Theſſ. 1. 3. Heb. 10. 36. *Hope* it ſelf (which one would think, when grounded well, ſhould be a no leſs eaſie, than pleaſant duty) doth need much labour to preſerve it ſafe, ſtreight and ſtable, among the many waves and billows of temptation aſſaying to ſhake and ſubvert it; whence *a patience of hope* is recommended to us; and we ſo often are exhorted to hold it faſt, to keep it ſure, firm and unſhaken to the end.

Heb. 6. 11. Ἐνδείκνυσθαι σπουδὴν. Heb. 3. 6, 14. 2 Pet. 1. 10.

Πάντας ἐξ ἀνὰς σόμα]Θ ὑμνῦσιν ὡς καλὸν μὲν ἡ σωφροσύνη τε καὶ δικαιοσύνη, χαλεπὴν μέντοι καὶ ὀπίπονον. Plat. de Rep. 2.

Temperance alſo ſurely demandeth no ſmall pains; it being no ſlight buſineſs to check our greedy appetites, to ſhun the enticements of pleaſure, to eſcape the ſnares of company and example, to ſupport the ill-will and reproaches of thoſe zealots and bigots for vice; who cannot tolerate any non-conformity to their extravagancies; but (as St. *Peter* doth expreſs it)

1 Pet. 4. 4. *think it ſtrange, if others do not run with them to the ſame exceſs of riot, ſpeaking ill of them for it.*

What ſhould I ſpeak of *meekneſs*, of *patience*, of *humility*, of *contentedneſs*? is it not manifeſt, how laborious thoſe vertues are, and what pains are neceſſary in the obtaining, in the exerciſe of them? what pains, I ſay, they require, in the voidance of fond conceits, in the ſuppreſſion of froward humours, in the quelling fierce paſſions, in the brooking grievous croſſes and adverſities, in the bearing heinous injuries and affronts?

Thus doth all vertue require much induſtry, and it therefore neceſſarily muſt it ſelf be a great vertue, which is the mother, the nurſe, the guardian of all vertues; yea which indeed is an ingredient and conſtitutive part of every vertue; for if vertue were eaſily obtainable or practicable without a good meaſure of pains, how could it be vertue? what excellency could it have, what praiſe could it claim, what reward could it expect? God hath indeed made the beſt things not eaſily obtainable, hath ſet them high out of our reach, to exerciſe our induſtry in getting them, that we might raiſe up our ſelves to them, that being obtained they may the more deſerve our eſteem, and his reward

Laſtly, The Sovereign good, the laſt ſcope of our actions, the top and ſum of our deſires, *Happineſs* it ſelf, or *eternal life* in perfect reſt, joy and glory; although it be the ſupream gift of God, and ſpecial *boon* of di-

Rom. 6. 23. Eph. 2. 8. vine grace (τὸ δὲ χάρισμα τοῦ Θεοῦ, *But*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *the gift of God's grace is eternal life*) Yet it alſo by God himſelf is declared to be the reſult and re-

Phil. 2. 12. 2 Pet. 1. 10. ward of induſtry; for we are commanded *to work out our ſalvation with fear and trembling*; and to *give diligence in making our calling and election*

Rom. 2. 6, 7. 10. 6. 22. *ſure*, by vertuous practice; and *God* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *will render to every man according to his works, to them who by patient continuance in well doing ſeek glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life*; and, in the cloſe of

Apoc. 22. God's Book it is proclaimed, as a truth of greateſt moment, and ſpecial point of God's will, *Bleſſed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life.* It is plainly induſtry, which climbeth

Heb. 12. 22. the holy *Mount*; it is induſtry, which taketh *the Kingdom of Heaven by*

Matt. 11. 12. 1 Cor. 9. 24. *force*; it is induſtry, which *ſo runneth, as to obtain* the prize; which ſo

Jac. 1. 12. fighteth as *to receive the crown*; which ſo *watcheth* as to ſecure our ever-

Matt. 24. 42. 25. 13. Luc. 12. 37. laſting intereſt to us.

Apoc. 3. 3. Thus do the choiceſt good things, of which we are capable, ſpring from induſtry, or depend upon it; and no conſiderable good can be attained without it; thus all the gifts of God are by it conveyed to us, or

are

are rendred in effect beneficial to us; for the gifts of nature are but capacities, which it improveth; the gifts of fortune or providence are but inſtruments, which it employeth to our uſe; the gifts of grace are the ſupports and ſuccours of it; and the very gift of glory is its fruit and recompence.

There are farther ſeveral other material conſiderations, and weighty motives to the practice of this duty; which meditation hath ſuggeſted to me; but theſe in regard to your patience, muſt ſuffice at preſent; the other (together with an application proper to our condition and calling) being reſerved to another occaſion.

SERMON XIX.

Of Induſtry in general.

ECCLES IX. 10.

Whatſoever thy hand findeth to doe, doe it with all thy might.

Induſtry, which the divine *Preacher* in this *Text* recommendeth to us, is a vertue of a very diffuſive nature and influence; ſtretching it ſelf through all our affairs, and twiſting it ſelf with every concern we have, ſo that no buſineſs can be well managed, no deſign accompliſhed, no good obtained without it: It therefore behoveth us to conceive a high opinion of it, and to inure our ſouls to the practice of it, upon all occaſions: In furtherance of which purpoſes I formerly, not long ſince, did propound ſeveral motives and inducements; And now proceeding on ſhall repreſent divers other conſiderations ſerviceable to the ſame end.

1. We may conſider, that induſtry is productive of eaſe it ſelf, and preventive of trouble: It was no leſs ſolidly, than acutely and ſmartly adviſed by the Philoſopher *Crates*, *whether* (ſaid he) *labour be to be choſen, labour; or whether it be to be eſchewed, labour, that thou mayſt not labour; for by not labouring, labour is not eſcaped, but is rather purſued*; and St. *Chryſoſtome* doth upon the ſame conſideration urge induſtry, becauſe *Sloth* (ſaith he) *is wont to ſpoil us, and to yeild us much pain*; No Man can cozen nature, eſcaping the labour to which he was born; but rather attempting it will delude himſelf, then finding moſt, when he ſhunneth all labour.

Εἰδ' αἱρετὸν ὁ πόνος, πόνει· εἴτε φευκτὸν, πόνει ἵνα μὴ πονῇς· διὰ γὰρ τὸ μὴ πονεῖν ἐφεύγεται πόνος, τῷ δ' ἐναντίῳ καὶ διώκεται, Crates, *Ep.* 4.

Ἡ ἀργία διαφθείρειν ἡμᾶς εἴωθε, καὶ πολὺν παρέχει τὸν πόνον. Chryſ. *in* Joh. *Orat.* 36.

Sloth indeed doth affect eaſe and quiet; but by affecting them doth loſe them; It hateth labour and trouble, but by hating them, doth incur them;

them; It is a ſelf-deſtroying vice, not ſuffering thoſe, who cheriſh it, to be idle, but creating much work, and multiplying pains unto them; engaging them into divers neceſſities and ſtraits, which they cannot ſupport with eaſe, and out of which without extream trouble they cannot extricate themſelves: Of this the *Preacher* doth afford us a plain inſtance;

Eccles 10. 18. *By much ſlothfulneſs* (ſaith he) *the building decayeth, and through idleneſs of the hands the houſe droppeth through*; A little care taken at firſt about repairing the houſe, would have ſaved its decay and ruine; and conſequently the vaſt charge and trouble, becoming needful to re-edify it: And the like doth happen in moſt other caſes and occurrences of life; idleneſs commonly doth let ſlip opportunities and advantages, which cannot with eaſe be retrieved; it letteth things fall into a bad caſe, out of which they can hardly be recovered.

The certain conſequences of it (diſgrace, penury, want of experience; diſobliging and loſing friends, with all the like miſchiefs) cannot be ſupported without much diſquiet; and they diſable a Man from redreſſing the inconveniences into which he is plunged.

But induſtry by a little voluntary labour taken in due place and ſeaſon doth ſave much neceſſary labour afterward, and by moderate care doth prevent intolerable diſtreſs; and the fruits of it (wealth, reputation, skill and dexterity in affairs, friendſhips, all advantages of fortune) do enable a man to paſs his life with great eaſe, comfort and delight.

2. Induſtry doth beget eaſe by procuring good habits, and facility of acting things expedient for us to do. By taking pains to day we ſhall need leſs pains the morrow; and by continuing the exerciſe, within a while we ſhall need no pains at all, but perform the moſt difficult tasks of duty, or of benefit to us with perfect eaſe, yea commonly with great pleaſure. What ſluggiſh people accompt hard and irkſome (as to riſe early, to hold cloſe to ſtudy, or buſineſs, to bear ſome hardſhip) will be natural and ſweet; as proceeding from another nature, raiſed in us by uſe.

Induſtry doth breed aſſurance and courage, needful for the undertaking and proſecution of all neceſſary buſineſs, or for the performance of all duties incumbent on us.

No Man can quite decline buſineſs, or diſengage himſelf from duty, without infinite damage and miſchief accruing to himſelf; but theſe an induſtrious Man (confiding in this efficacious quality) will ſet upon with alacrity, and diſpatch with facility; his diligence voiding obſtacles, and ſmoothing the way to him; whenas idleneſs finding ſome difficulties, and fanſying more, ſoon diſheartneth, and cauſeth a Man to deſiſt from action, rather chuſing to crouch under the burthen, than by endeavour to carry it through to diſcharge himſelf thereof: Whence as to an induſtrious Man things ſeeming difficult will prove eaſie, ſo to a ſlothful Perſon the eaſieſt things will appear impoſſible; according to *Solomon*'s obſervation, *The way* (ſaith he) *of* * *a ſlothful man is an hedge of thorns, but the way of the upright is made plain*; whereas a ſlothful Man, being apt to neglect his obligations, is oppoſed to an upright man, who hath a conſcionable regard to them, and is willing to take pains in the diſcharge of them; ſo it is declared, that to the one the way is rough and thorny, to the other beaten and expedite.

* עֲצֵל

Prov. 15. 19. Ὁδὸς ἀνεργῶν ἐστρωμένη αἰ δὲ τρίβοι τῶν ἀνδρείων τετειμένα.

And

And again, *The ſlothful man* (ſaith he) *doth ſay, there is a Lyon without, I ſhall be ſlain in the ſtreets*; he is very apt to conceit, or to pretend imaginary difficulties and hazards, and thence to be deterred from going about his buſineſs, or doing his duty: This conſideration of St. *Chryſoſtome* doth propoſe, exciting to an earneſt purſuit of vertue; becauſe, *There is* (ſaith he) *nothing ſo eaſie, which our great ſloth doth not repreſent very grievous and burthenſome; nothing ſo painful and difficult, which diligence and willingneſs do not ſhew to be very eaſie.*

Prov. 22. 13. 26. 13.

Περφασίζεται ϰ̀ λέγει ὀκνηρὸς, Λέων ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ, ἐν δὲ τῇ πλατείαις φονεύτα.

Οὐδὲν ὕτως ἐστι ῥᾴδιον, ὁ μὴ σφόδρα βαρὺ ϰ̀ ἐπαχθὲς ὁ πολὺς δείκνυσιν ὄκνος ἡμῶν· ὥσπερ ἐπίπονον ϰ̀ δυσχερὲς, ὁ μὴ λίαν εὔϰολον ἢ σπουδὴ ϰ̀ ἡ φιλοτιμία Chryſ. *Tom.* 6. *Or.* 15. *p.* 141.

Τὰ μὲν ῥᾴδια τὲς ἀμελοῦντας φεύγει, τὰ δὲ ϰαλὰ ἐπιμελείαις ἁλίσϰεται. Plut. *de Educ.*

3. We may conſider, that induſtry will ſweeten all our enjoyments, and ſeaſon them with a grateful reliſh; for as no man can well enjoy himſelf, or find ſound content in any thing, while buſineſs or duty lie unfiniſhed on his hand; ſo when he hath done his beſt toward the diſpatch of his work, he will then comfortably take his eaſe, and enjoy his pleaſure; then his food doth taſt ſavourily, then his divertiſements and recreations have a lively guſtfulneſs, then his ſleep is very ſound and pleaſant, according to that of the *Preacher, The ſleep of a labouring man is ſweet.*

Eccles 5. 12. Τῷ δ' ϰάλε.

4. Eſpecially thoſe accommodations prove moſt delightful, which our induſtry hath procured to us; we looking on them with a ſpecial tenderneſs of affection, as on the children of our endeavour; we being ſenſible at what coſts of care and pain we did purchaſe them. If a Man getteth wealth by fraud or violence, if he riſeth to preferment by flattery, detraction, or any bad arts, he can never taſt any good ſavour, or find ſound comfort in them; And from what cometh merely by chance, as there is no commendation due, ſo much ſatisfaction will not ariſe; 'Tis the *Wiſe-man*'s obſervation, *The ſlothful man roſteth not that which he took in hunting*, and therefore it cannot be very grateful to him; but (addeth he) *the ſubſtance of a diligent man is pretious*; that is, what a Man compaſſeth by honeſt induſtry, that he is apt highly to prize; he triumpheth in it, and (in St. *Paul*'s ſenſe innocently) *boaſteth* of it; he feeleth a ſolid pleaſure, and a pure complacency therein; the manner of getting it doth more pleaſe him; than the thing it ſelf; as true Hunters do love the ſport more than the quarry, and generous Warriours more rejoice in the victory than in the ſpoil; for *our ſoul* (as St. *Chryſoſtome* diſcourſeth) *is more affected with thoſe things, for which it hath laboured; for which reaſon* (addeth he) *God hath mixt labours with vertue it ſelf, that he might endear it to us.* Yea farther,

Cui ſit conditio dulcis ſine pulvere palmæ? Hor. *Ep. I.* 1.

Prov 12. 27.

1 Cor. 9. 15.

Περὶ ἐϰεῖνα μᾶλλον ἡ ψυχὴ διάϰειται, ὑπὲρ ὧν ἔϰαμε· διὰ τοῦτο ϰ̀ πόνες ἀνέμιξεν ἀρετῇ οἰϰειῶσαι αὐτῇ ταύτλω ϐελόμενος. Chryſ. *in* Joh. *Orat.* 36.

5. The very exerciſe of induſtry immediately in it ſelf is delightful, and hath an innate ſatisfaction, which tempereth all annoyances, and even ingratiateth the pains going with it.

The very ſettlement of our mind on fit objects, or its acquieſcence in determinate action, conducing to a good end, whereby we are freed of doubt, diſtraction, and faſtidious liſtleſneſs, doth miniſter content.

The reflexion upon our having embraced a wiſe choice, our proceeding in a fair way, our being in chaſe of a good purpoſe, doth breed complacence.

To conſider that we are ſpending our time accomptably, and improving our talents to good advantage (to the ſervice of God, the benefit of our neighbour, the bettering of our own ſtate) is very chearing and comfortable.

And whereas *In all labour* (as the *Wiſe-man* telleth us) *there is profit*, the

Prov. 14. 23.

the foreſight of that profit affordeth pleaſure, the foretaſting the good fruits of our induſtry is very delicious.

Hope indeed doth ever wait on induſtry; and what is more delightful than hope? this is the incentive, the ſupport, the condiment of all honeſt labour; in virtue whereof the Husbandman toileth, the Merchant trudgeth, the Scholar ploddeth, the Souldier dareth with alacrity and courage, not reſenting any pains, not regarding any hazards, which attend their undertakings: This the holy *Apoſtles* tell us did enable them with joy to ſuſtain all their painful work, and hazardous warfare; injoining us alſo as to *work with fear*, ſo to *rejoice in hope*.

1 Cor. 9. 10. —— *ipſa operis difficultate lætus ſpem ſegetis de labore metitur*, *Apud* Aug. *Ep.* 142. Rom. 12. 12. 5. 2. Heb. 3. 6. 1 Tim. 4. 10. (Col. 1. 5. 2 Cor. 3. 12. 1 John 3. 3. Pet. 1. 3. Tit. 2. 13.)

In fine, Induſtry doth free us from great diſpleaſure, by redeeming us from the moleſtations of idleneſs, which is the moſt tedious and irkſome thing in the World; racking our ſoul with anxious ſuſpence, and perplexing diſtraction; ſtarving it for want of ſatisfactory entertainment, or cauſing it to feed on its own heart by doleful conſiderations; infeſting it with crowds of frivolous, melancholick, troubleſome, ſtinging thoughts; galling it with a ſenſe of our ſquandering away pretious time, of our ſlipping fair opportunities, of our not uſing the abilities and advantages granted us, to any profit or fruit: Whence St. *Chryſoſtome* ſaith very truly, that *there is nothing more unpleaſant, more painful, more miſerable, than a man that hath nothing to do*; *Is not this* (ſaith he) *worſe than ten thouſand chains to hang in ſuſpence, and be continually gaping, looking on thoſe, who are preſent*? Indeed the ſtricteſt Impriſonment is far more tolerable, than being under reſtraint by a lazy humour from profitable employment; this enchaineth a man, hand and foot, with more than iron fetters; this is beyond any impriſonment, it is the very entombment of a Man, quite in effect ſequeſtring him from the World, or debarring him from any valuable concerns therein. And if liberty be ἐξουσία αὐτοπραγίας, a power of doing what one liketh beſt; then is he, who by his ſloth is diſabled from doing any thing, wherein he can find any reaſonable ſatisfaction, the verieſt ſlave that can be; from which ſlavery induſtry freeing us, and diſpoſing us to perform chearfully whatever is convenient, thereby doeth us a great pleaſure. Farther,

Otio qui neſcit uti plus habet negotii, &c. —— *Otioſo in otio animus neſcit quid quidem velit*, &c. Ennius *apud* Agell. 19. 10.

Καὶ τὶ ἀνδριάντων γένοιτ' ἂν ἀνθρώπου δεδεμένου ἔχοντος ποιεῖν; τί μοχθηρότερον; τί παλαιπωρότερον μυρίων ὑ χείρων τοῦτο δεσμῶν, χασμᾶσθαι καὶ καχλιάνειν διαπαντὸς ὁρᾶν τ' ἀγορᾶς καθήμενον, ὁρῶντα τοὺς παριόντας; Chryſ. *in* Act. *Or.* 35.

Otium eſt vivi hominis ſepultura.

6. Let us conſider, that induſtry doth afford a laſting comfort, depoſited in the memory and conſcience of him, that practiſeth it. It will ever upon his reviewing the paſſages of his life, be ſweet to him to behold in them teſtimonies and monuments of his diligence; it will pleaſe him to conſider, that he hath lived to purpoſe, having done ſomewhat conſiderable! that he hath made an advantageous uſe of his time; that he hath well husbanded the talents committed to him; that he hath accompliſhed (in ſome meaſure) the intents of God's bounty, and made ſome return for his excellent gifts. What comfort indeed can any Man have, yea how ſore remorſe muſt he feel in reflecting upon a life ſpent in unfruitful and unprofitable idleneſs? How can he otherwiſe than bewail his folly and baſeneſs in having lived (or rather having onely been) in vain; as the ſhadow and appearance of a Man; in having laviſhed his days, in having buried his talents, in having imbezilled his faculties of nature, and his advantages from providence; in having defeated the good will of God, and endeavoured no requital to the munificent goodneſs of his

Diu fuit, non diu vixit.

his Maker, of his Preſerver, his benign Lord and Maſter, his gratious Saviour and Redeemer? How without confuſion, can he in his mind revolve, that he hath no-wiſe benefited the World, and profited his Neighbour, or obliged his friends, or rendred to his Countrey, (to the Society, or Community of which he is a Member) amends for all the ſafety and quiet, the ſupport, the convenience, and the pleaſure he hath enjoyed under its protection, and in its boſome? that he hath not born a competent ſhare in the common burthens, or paid a due contribution of his care and labour to the publick welfare? how can ſuch a Man look inward upon himſelf with a favourable eye, or pardon himſelf for ſo loathſome defaults? Matt. 25. 26.

7. Let us conſider, that induſtry doth argue a generous and ingenuous complexion of ſoul.

It implieth a mind not content with mean and vulgar things (ſuch as nature dealeth to all, or fortune ſcattereth about) but aſpiring to things of high worth, and purſuing them in a brave way, with adventurous courage, by its own forces, through difficulties and obſtacles.

It ſignifieth in a Man a heart, not enduring to owe the ſuſtenance or convenience of his life to the labour or the liberality of others; to pilfer a livelihood from the World; to reap the benefit of other mens care and toil, without rendring a full compenſation, or outdoing his private obligations by conſiderable ſervice and beneficence to the publick.

A noble heart will diſdain to ſubſiſt like a drone upon the hony gathered by others labour; like a vermine to filtch its food out of the publick granary; or like a ſhark to prey on the leſſer fry; but will, one way or other earn his ſubſiſtence; for he that doth not earn, can hardly own his bread, as St. *Paul* implieth, when he ſaith, *Them that are ſuch we command and exhort by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that with quietneſs they work, and eat their own bread.* 2 Theſſ. 2. 12. Τὸν ἑαυτῶν ἄρτον.

Of this generous ingenuity we have a notable inſtance in that great *Apoſtle* himſelf; which he doth often repreſent as a Pattern to us, profeſſing much complacence therein; He with all right and reaſon might have challenged a comfortable ſubſiſtence from his Diſciples, in recompence for the incomparable benefits he did confer on them, and of the exceſſive pains he did endure for their good; this he knew well, but yet did rather chuſe to ſupport himſelf by his own labour, than any-wiſe to ſeem burthenſome or troubleſome to them; *Theſe hands* (ſaid he) *have miniſtred to my neceſſities, and to them that are with me; I have ſhewed you all things, that ſo labouring ye ought to ſupport the weak, and to remember the words of our Lord Jeſus, how he ſaid, It is more bleſſed to give than to receive.* This was the practice of him, who was in *labours moſt abundant*; and ſuch is the *genius* of every Man, who upon principles of conſcience, reaſon and honour, is induſtrious. Of him it may be ſaid, as of *Solomon*'s good Houſewife, *She ſeeketh wool and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands; ſhe is like the merchants ſhip, ſhe bringeth her food from afar; ſhe looketh well to her houſehold, and eateth not the bread of idleneſs.* 1 Cor. 9. 15. 2 Theſſ. 3. 9. 1 Cor. 9. 11. 1 Theſſ. 2. 6. Act. 20. 34, 35. 18. 3. 1 Theſſ. 2. 9. 2 Theſſ. 3. 8. 1 Cor. 4. 12. 2 Cor. 11. 9. 2 Cor. 11. 23. Prov. 31. 13, 14, 27.

Sloth is a baſe quality, the argument of a mind wretchedly degenerate and mean; which is content to grovel in a deſpicable ſtate; which aimeth at no worthy thing, nor purſueth any thing in a laudable way; which diſpoſeth a Man to live *gratis* (precariouſly) and ingratefully on the publick ſtock; as an inſignificant cipher among Men, as a burthen of the Earth, as a wen of any Society; ſucking aliment from it, but yeilding no benefit or ornament thereto.

8. In-

8. Induſtry is a fence to Innocence and Vertue; a bar to all kind of ſin and vice; guarding the avenues of our Heart, keeping off the occaſions and temptations to vitious practice. When a Man is engaged in honeſt employment, and ſeriouſly intent thereon, his Mind is prepoſſeſſed and filled, ſo that there is no room or vacancy for ill thoughts, or baſe deſigns to creep in; his ſenſes do not lye open to enſnaring objects; he wants leiſure, and opportunity of granting audience to the ſolicitations of ſinful pleaſure; and is apt to anſwer them with a *non vacat*; the Devil can hardly find advantage of tempting him, at leaſt many Devils cannot get acceſs to him; according to that obſervation in *Caſſian*, *A working Monk is aſſaulted by one Devil, but an idle one is ſpoiled by numberleſs bad Spirits.* The caſe of Men ordinarily is like to that of *Ægyſthus*

Semper te diabolus invenit occupatum. Bern. *form. hon. v. cap.* 7.

Operans monachus uno dæmone pulſatur, otioſus vero innumeris Spiritibus devaſtatur. Caſſ. *de Inſtit.* 10. 23.

Ovid. *de Remed.*

——*ne nil ageretur, amavit,*

rather than doe nothing, he was ready to do ill; he not having buſineſs to employ his thoughts, wanton deſires did inſinuate themſelves into his Heart, and tranſported him to that diſaſtrous wickedneſs, which ſupplyed matter to ſo many Tragedies: And the like inſtance the *Sacred Hiſtory* ſuggeſted in King *David*, who *walking* ('tis ſaid) *on the roof of his houſe*, his mind then roving, and being untacked from honeſt cares, that temptation ſeiſed on him, whereby he was plunged into that woful miſdemeanour, which did create to him ſo much ſorrow, did make ſuch a ſpot in his life, and leave ſuch a blur on his memory; whence yet we may draw ſome benefit, taking it as a profitable document and warning, how idleneſs doth expoſe the beſt Men to danger.

2 Sim. 11. 2.

Idleneſs is indeed the nurſery of ſins, which as naturally grow up therein as Weeds in a neglected Field, or Inſects in a ſtanding Puddle; *Idleneſs teacheth much evil.* It is the general Trap, whereby every tempter aſſayeth to catch our ſoul; for the Mind being looſe from care, Satan is ready to ſtep in with his ſuggeſtions, the World preſenteth its allurements, fleſhly deſires riſe up; proud, froward, wanton cogitations ſlip in; ill company doth entice, ill example is regarded, every temptation doth object and impreſs it ſelf with great advantage and force; Men in ſuch a caſe being apt to cloſe and comply with temptations even to divert their Mind, and entertain themſelves, to cure their liſtleſneſs, to paſs their time; committing ſin, for want of better occupation. Hence in places, where there is leaſt work, the worſt ſins do moſt prevail; and idleneſs therefore was by the Prophet reckoned one of the three great ſins of *Sodom*, Parents of the reſt, *Behold* (ſaith *Ezekiel*) *this was the iniquity of thy ſiſter Sodom; pride, fulneſs of bread, and abundance of idleneſs was in her:* Hence it ſeldom doth happen in any way of life, that a ſluggard and a rakel do not go together, or that he who is idle is not alſo diſſolute.

Ecclus 33. 27.

——*ſi non*
Intendes animum ſtudiis, & rebus honeſtis
Invidia vel amare vigil torquebere ——
Hor. *Ep.* 1. 2.

Ezek. 16. 49.

9. Particularly induſtry doth prevent the ſins of vain curioſity, pragmaticalneſs, troubleſome impertinency, and the like peſts of common life; into which perſons not diligently following their own buſineſs, will aſſuredly fall. *We hear* (ſaith St. *Paul* to the *Theſſalonians*) *that there are ſome who walk among you diſorderly, working not at all, but are buſie-bodies*; 'tis no wonder, if they did *not work at all*, that they ſhould *walk diſorderly*; or that quite neglecting their own concerns, they ſhould *overwork*

2 Theſſ. 3. 11.
Μηδὲν ἐργαζομένους, ἀλλὰ περιεργαζομένους, Working nothing, but overworking.

overwork, or be too buſie in matters not belonging to them, intruding themſelves into the affairs of their neighbours; for there is a natural connexion between theſe things; ſince every Man muſt be thinking, muſt be doing, muſt be ſaying ſomewhat, to ſpend his leiſure, to uphold converſation, to pleaſe himſelf and gratify others, to appear ſomebody among his Companions; to avoid the ſhame of being quite out of employment; wherefore not having the heart to mind his own affairs, he will take the boldneſs to meddle with the concerns of other Men; If he cannot have the ſubſtance, he will ſet up an Idol of buſineſs, and ſeem very active in his impertinency. In order thereto being curiouſly inquiſitive, and prying into the diſcourſe, actions and affairs of all Men. This Men are apt to do in their own defence; and beſides, idleneſs doth put Men into a looſe, gariſh, wanton humour, diſpoſing them without heed or regard to meddle with any thing, to prattle at any rate. In fine, whoever hath no work at home, will be gadding to ſeek entertainment abroad, like thoſe Goſſips of whom St. *Paul* ſaith, *They learn to be idle, wandring about from houſe to houſe; and not only idle, but tatlers alſo, and buſie-bodies, ſpeaking things, which they ought not*: If indeed we conſider, all the frivolous and petulant diſcourſe, the impertinent chattings, the raſh cenſures, the ſpiteful detractions which are ſo rife in the World, and ſo much poiſon all converſation, we ſhall find the main root of them to be a want of induſtry in Men, or of diligent attendance on their own matters; which would ſo much take up their ſpirit and time, that they would have little heart or leiſure to ſearch into, or comment upon other Mens actions and concerns. 1 Tim. 5. 3.

10. Let us conſider that induſtry is needful in every condition and ſtation, in every calling and way of life, in all relations, for our good behaviour, and right diſcharge of our duty in them. Without it we cannot in any ſtate act decently, or uſefully, either to the benefit and ſatisfaction of others, or to our own advantage and comfort.

Are we rich? then is induſtry requiſite for keeping and ſecuring our Wealth, for managing it wiſely, for employing it to its proper uſes, and beſt advantages; (in the ſervice of God, in beneficence to our neighbour, in advancing publick good) ſo that we may render a good accompt to him, who hath entruſted us, with the ſtewardſhip thereof: Induſtry is very needful to guard us from the temptations and miſchiefs to which Wealth doth expoſe us, that it do not prove a treacherous ſnare, an unwieldly burthen, a deſtructive poiſon and plague to us, throwing us into pride and vanity, into luxury, into ſtupidity, into diſtracting ſolicitude, into a baſe worldly and earthly temper of heart, into a profane oblivion of God, and of our own ſouls.

Are we in conſpicuous rank of dignity, or in honour and repute among Men? then is induſtry requiſite to keep us faſt in that ſtate, to hold us from tumbling from that Pinnacle down into extreme diſgrace; for then all eyes are upon us, ſtrictly obſerving what we do, and ready to paſs cenſure on our actions; ſo that great diligence is neceſſary to approve our ſelves, and ſhun obloquy. Nothing is more brittle than honour, every little thing hitting on it, is able to break it, and therefore without exceeding care we cannot preſerve it; Nothing is more variable or fickle than the opinions of Men (wherein honour conſiſteth) it is therefore no eaſie matter to fix, or detain them in the ſame place. *Vitrea fama.* Hor. Eccl. 10. 1.

Honour cannot live without food, or fewel; it muſt be nouriſhed by worthy actions; without a continual ſupply of them, it will decay, languiſh,

guiſh, and pine away: Induſtry therefore is required to keep it; and no leſs is neceſſary to uſe it well, in a due ſubordination to God's honour, and reference to his ſervice; that inſtead of an ornament and convenience, it do not prove a baneful miſchief to us; puffing up our minds with vain conceits and complacencies, inclining us to arrogance and contempt of others, tempting us by aſſuming to our ſelves to rob God of his due glory; to decline which evils great care is requiſite; we muſt have a ſteady Balaſt, and we muſt hold the Rudder warily, when we carry ſo great ſail.

On the other hand, are we poor, and low in the World; or do we lie under diſgrace? then do we much need induſtry to ſhun extremities of want and ignominy; that we be not ſwallowed up, and overwhelmed by need or contempt; to ſupport us under our preſſures, to keep up our ſpirits from dejection and diſconſolateneſs; to preſerve us from impious diſcontentedneſs and impatience: Induſtry is the onely remedy of that condition, enabling us to get out of it, retrieving a competence of wealth or credit; or diſpoſing us to bear it handſomely, and with comfort; ſo as not to become forelorn or abject wretches.

It is ſo needful to every condition; and it is ſo for all vocations; for,

Is a Man a Governour, or a Superiour in any capacity? then what is he, but a publick ſervant, doomed to continual labour, hired for the wages of reſpect and pomp to wait on his People; in providing for their needs, protecting their ſafety, preſerving their peace and welfare; where is he but on a ſtage, whereon he cannot well act his part, without vigilant attendance to his charge, and conſtant activity in performing all the functions thereof? He is engaged in great obligations and neceſſities of uſing extreme diligence; both in regard to himſelf, and others. *Homer*'s deſcription of a Prince is a good one; *one who hath much people, and many cares committed to him*;

Ὦ λαοὶ τ' ὄπιτρεφέται, καὶ πόνα μίμνε.

He muſt watchfully look to his own ſteps, who is to guide others by his authority, and his example. All his actions require ſpecial conduct, not onely his own credit and intereſt, but the common welfare depending thereon. He muſt heedfully adviſe what to do, he muſt diligently execute what he reſolveth on. He hath the moſt tickliſh things that can be (the rights and intereſts, the opinions and humours of Men) to manage. He hath his own affections to curb and guide, that they be not perverted by any ſiniſter reſpects, not ſwayed by any unjuſt partiality, not corrupted by flattery or fear. He will find, that to weild power innocently, to brandiſh the Sword of juſtice diſcreetly and worthily, for the maintenance of right, and encouragement of vertue, for the ſuppreſſion of injury, and correction of vice is a matter of no ſmall skill, or ſlight care.

Induſtry is indeed a quality moſt proper for Perſons of high rank and dignity, or of great power and authority; who have ſpecial opportunities to employ it in weighty affairs to great advantage; whoſe undertakings being of vaſt moment do need anſwerable efforts to move and guide them: The induſtry of a Mechanick, or a Ruſtick, acting in a low and narrow ſphere can effect no great matter, and therefore it ſelf need not to be great; but the induſtry of a Prince, of a Nobleman, of a Gentleman may have a large and potent influence, ſo as to render a Nation, a County, a Town happy, proſperous, glorious, flouriſhing in peace, in plenty, in vertue; it therefore for atchieving ſuch purpoſes need be, and ſhould be proportionably great; a ſmall power not being able

able to move a great weight, nor a weak cause to produce a mighty effect. Wherefore *Cicero* recommending *Pompey* for a publick charge, doth reckon these to be the *Imperatoriæ virtutes*, qualities befitting a *Prince* or *General*, wherein he did excel, *labour in businesse, valour in dangers, industry in acting, nimblenesse in performance, counsel in providing.*—— And *Alexander the Great*, reflecting on his Friends degenerating into sloth and luxury, told them, that it was *a most slavish thing to luxuriate, and a most royal thing to labour.*

Labor in negotio, fortitudo in periculis, industria in agendo, celeritas in conficiendo, consilium in providendo, &c. Cic. *pro lege* Manil.

Δειλικώτατόν ἐστι τὸ τρυφᾶν, βασιλικώτατον δὲ πονεῖν. Plut. *in* Alex. *p.* 1262.

And for those who move in a lower orb of subjection or service, I need not shew how needful industry is for them: Who knoweth not that to be a good Subject, doth exact a careful regard to the commands of Superiours, and a painful diligence in observing them? that to make a good servant fidelity and diligence must concur; whereof the first doth suppose the last, it being a part of honesty in a servant to be diligent; whence πονηρὲ καὶ ὀκνηρὲ, *O thou wicked and slothful servant*, were in the *Gospel* well coupled; and the first *epithet* was grounded on the second, he being therefore wicked, because he had been slothful. Matt. 25. 26.

Neither can a Man be a true Friend, or a good Neighbour, or anywise a good Relative, without industry disposing him to undergo pains, in performing good Offices, whenever need doth require, or occasion invite.

In fine, it is palpable, that there is no calling of any sort, from the Sceptre to the Spade, the management whereof with any good success, any credit, any satisfaction doth not demand much work of the head, or of the hand, or of both.

If Wit or Wisedom be the Head, if Honesty be the Heart, Industry is the Right hand of every Vocation; without which the shrewdest insight, and the best intention can execute nothing.

A Sluggard is qualified for no Office, no Calling, no Station among Men, he is a mere No-body; taking up Room, pestering and clogging the World.

11. It also may deserve our Consideration, that it is Industry, whereto the publick state of the World, and of each Commonweal therein is indebted for its being, in all Conveniences and Embellishments belonging to life, advanced above rude and sordid Barbarism; yea whereto Mankind doth owe all that good Learning, that Morality, those improvements of soul, which elevate us beyond Brutes.

To industrious study is to be ascribed the invention and perfection of all those Arts, whereby humane life is civilized, and the World cultivated with numberless Accommodations, Ornaments and Beauties.

All the comely, the stately, the pleasant, and useful Works, which we do view with delight, or enjoy with comfort, industry did contrive them, industry did frame them.

Industry reared those magnificent Fabricks, and those commodious Houses; it formed those goodly Pictures and Statues; it raised those convenient Causeways, those Bridges, those Aqueducts; it planted those fine Gardens with various Flowers and Fruits; it cloathed those pleasant Fields with Corn and Grass; it built those Ships, whereby we plow the Seas, reaping the Commodities of forreign Regions. It hath subjected all Creatures to our Command and Service, enabling us to subdue the fiercest, to catch the wildest, to render the gentler sort most tractable, and useful to us. It taught us from the Wool of the Sheep, from the Hair

of the Goat, from the Labours of the Silk-worm to weave us Cloaths, to keep us warm, to make us fine and gay. It helpeth us from the inmoſt Bowels of the Earth to fetch divers needful Tools and Utenſils.

It collected Mankind into Cities, and compacted them into orderly Societies, and deviſed wholeſome Laws, under ſhelter whereof we enjoy ſafety and peace, wealth and plenty, mutual ſuccour and defence, ſweet converſation and beneficial commerce.

Ut varias uſus meditando extunderet artes Paulatim, &c. Virg. *Georg. I.*

It by meditation did invent all thoſe Sciences whereby our Minds are enriched and enabled, our Manners are refined and poliſhed, our Curioſity is ſatisfied, our Life is benefited.

What is there, which we admire, or wherein we delight, that pleaſeth our Mind, or gratifieth our ſenſe, for the which we are not beholden to Induſtry.

Doth any Country flouriſh in Wealth, in Grandeur, in Proſperity? it muſt be imputed to Induſtry, to the induſtry of its Governours ſetling good order, to the induſtry of its People following profitable Occupations: So did *Cato*, in that notable *Oration* of his in *Saluſt*, tell the *Roman* Senate, that it was not by the force of their Arms, but by the induſtry of their Anceſtors that Commonwealth did ariſe to ſuch a pitch of greatneſs. When ſloth creepeth in, then all things corrupt and decay; then the publick State doth ſink into diſorder, penury, and a diſgraceful condition.

Cato *apud* Sal. *in bello Catil.*

12. Induſtry is commended to us by all ſorts of example, deſerving our regard and imitation. All nature is a copy thereof, and the whole World a glaſs, wherein we may behold this duty repreſented to us.

We may eaſily obſerve every Creature about us inceſſantly working toward the end for which it was deſigned, indefatigably exerciſing the powers, with which it is endued; diligently obſerving the Laws of its creation. Even Beings void of reaſon, of ſenſe, of life it ſelf do ſuggeſt unto us reſemblances of induſtry; they being ſet in continual action toward the effecting reaſonable purpoſes, conducing to the preſervation of their own beings, or to the furtherance of common good.

The Heavens do roll about with unwearied motion; the Sun and Stars do perpetually dart their influences; the Earth is ever labouring in the birth and nouriſhment of Plants; the Plants are drawing Sap, and ſprouting out Fruits, and Seeds (to feed us, and propagate themſelves;) the Rivers are running, the Seas are toſſing, the Winds are bluſtring to keep the Elements ſweet, in which we live.

Prov. 6. 6. *Solomon* ſendeth us to the *ant*, and biddeth us to *conſider her ways* (which *provideth her meat in the ſummer, and gathereth her food in the harveſt*) many ſuch Inſtructours we may find in nature; the like induſtrious providence we may obſerve in every living creature; we may ſee this running about, that ſwimming, another flying in purveyance of its food and ſupport.

If we look up higher to rational and intelligent natures, ſtill more noble and appoſite Patterns do object themſelves to us.

Here below every Field, every Shop, every Street, the Hall, the Exchange, the Court it ſelf (all full of buſineſs, and fraught with the fruits of induſtry) do mind us how neceſſary induſtry is to us.

If we conſult Hiſtory, we ſhall there find, that the beſt Men have been moſt induſtrious; that all great Perſons, renowned for heroical goodneſs (the worthy *Patriarchs*, the holy *Prophets*, the bleſſed *Apoſtles*) were

were for this moſt commendable, that neglecting their private eaſe, they did undertake difficult enterprizes, they did undergo painful labours for the benefit of Mankind; they did paſs their days, like St. *Paul*, ἐν κόποις ἐν μόχθοις, *in labours*, and *toilſome pains* for thoſe purpoſes. 2 Cor. 11. 27.

Our great example, the life of our Bleſſed Lord himſelf, what was it but one continual exerciſe of labour? His Mind did ever ſtand bent in careful attention, ſtudying to do good; his body was ever moving in wearisome travel to the ſame divine intent. Acts 10.

If we yet ſoar farther in our Meditation to the ſuperiour Regions, we ſhall there find the bleſſed Inhabitants of Heaven, the Courtiers and Miniſters of God, very buſie and active; They do vigilantly wait on God's Throne, in readineſs to receive and to diſpatch his Commands; they are ever on the wing, and fly about like lightning *to do his pleaſure*. They are attentive to our needs, and ever ready to protect, to aſſiſt, to relieve us! eſpecially they are diligent Guardians and Succourers of good Men; *officious ſpirits, ſent forth to miniſter for the heirs of ſalvation*; ſo even the ſeat of perfect reſt is no place of idleneſs. Σῷ ϝ θρόνῳ πυρόεντι παρέστασιν πολύμοχθοι Ἄγγελοι. Orph. Pſ. 103. 21, 22. Pſal. 34. 8. 91. 11. Heb. 1. 14.

Yea God himſelf, although immoveably and infinitely happy, is yet immenſly careful, and everlaſtingly buſie; He reſted once from that great work of Creation, but yet *my Father* (ſaith our Lord) *worketh ſtill*; and he never will reſt from his works of Providence, and of Grace. His Eyes continue watchful over the World, and his hands ſtretched out in upholding it. He hath a ſingular regard to every creature, ſupplying the needs of each, and *ſatisfying the deſires of all*. Gen. 2. 2. John 5. 27. Pſal. 121. 3. 127. 1. Zech. 4. 10. 2 Chron. 16. 9. *O tu bone omnipotens, qui ſic curas unumquemque noſtrum tanquam ſolum cures, & ſic omnes tanquam ſingulos.* Aug. *Conf.* 4. 11.

And ſhall we alone be idle, while all things are ſo buſie? ſhall we keep our hands in our boſome, or ſtretch our ſelves on our beds of lazineſs, while all the World about us is hard at work, in purſuing the deſigns of its creation? Shall we be wanting to our ſelves, while ſo many things labour for our benefit? Shall not ſuch a cloud of Examples ſtir us to ſome induſtry? Not to comply with ſo univerſal a practice, to croſs all the World, to diſagree with every creature, is it not very monſtrous and extravagant? Pſal. 145. 15, 16. (Prov. 5. 21. 15. 3. Pſal. 34. 15. Gen. 31. 49. Jer. 31. 18.)

I ſhould cloſe all this diſcourſe with that, at which in pitching on this ſubject I chiefly did aim, an application exhortatory to our ſelves, urging the practice of this vertue by conſiderationss peculiar to us as *Scholars*, and derived from the nature of our calling; but the doing this, requiring a larger diſcourſe, than the time now will allow. I ſhall reſerve to another occaſion; adding onely one conſideration more.

13. Laſtly, if we conſider, we ſhall find the root and ſource of all the inconveniences, the miſchiefs, the wants, of which we are ſo apt to complain, to be our ſloth; and that there is hardly any of them, which commonly we might not eaſily prevent or remove by induſtry: Why is any Man a Beggar, why contemptible, why ignorant, why vitious, why miſerable? why, but for this one reaſon, becauſe he is ſlothful! becauſe he will not labour to rid himſelf of thoſe evils? What could we want, if we would but take the pains to ſeek it, either by our induſtry, or by our devotion? for where the firſt will not do, the ſecond cannot fail, to procure any good thing from him, who giveth *to all men liberally*, and hath promiſed to ſupply the defect of our ability by his free bounty; ſo that if we join theſe two induſtries (induſtrious action, and induſtrious prayer) there is nothing in the world ſo good, or ſo great, of which, if we Jac. 1. 5. Δέησις ἐνεργουμένη. Jam. 5. 16.

are

Προσκαρτερησις. Eph. 6. 18. Rom. 12. 12. Col. 4. 2. 1 Theſſ. 5. 23. Heb. 13. 20.

are capable, we may not aſſuredly become Maſters: And even for induſtry it ſelf, eſpecially in the performance of all our duties toward God, let us induſtriouſly pray; Even ſo, *The God of peace ſanctify us wholly; and make us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is well pleaſing in his ſight; through our bleſſed Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, to whom for ever be all glory and praiſe.* Amen.

SERMON XX.

Of Induſtry in our general Calling, as *Chriſtians.*

ROM. XII. 11.

Not ſlothful in buſineſs.

Τῇ σπουδῇ μὴ ὀκνηροί. *Solicitudine non pigri.* Vulg.

INduſtry is a very eminent Vertue, being an ingredient (or the parent) of all other vertues, of conſtant uſe upon all occaſions, and having influence upon all our affairs.

For it is our Nature framed; all our powers of Soul and Body being fitted for it, tending to it, requiring it for their preſervation and perfection.

We were deſigned for it in our firſt happy ſtate; and upon our lapſe thence were farther doomed to it, as the ſole Remedy of our needs and the inconveniences, to which we became expoſed. For

Without it we cannot well ſuſtain or ſecure our life in the enjoyment of any comfort or convenience; we muſt work to earn our Food, our Cloathing, our Shelter; and to ſupply every indigency of Accommodations, which our Nature doth crave.

To it God hath annexed the beſt, and moſt deſirable rewards; ſucceſs to our undertakings, wealth, honour, wiſedom, vertue, ſalvation; all which as they flow from God's bounty, and depend on his bleſſing; ſo from them they are uſually conveyed to us through our induſtry, as the ordinary chanel and inſtrument of attaining them.

It is requiſite to us even for procuring eaſe, and preventing a neceſſity of immoderate labour.

It is in it ſelf ſweet and ſatisfactory; as freeing our mind from diſtraction, and wrecking irreſolution; as feeding us with good hope, and yeilding a foretaſt, of its good fruits.

It furniſheth us with courage to attempt, and reſolution to atchieve things needful, worthy of us, and profitable to us.

It

It is attended with a good conſcience, and chearful reflexions, of having well ſpent our time, and employed our talents to good advantage.

It ſweetneth our enjoyments, and ſeaſoneth our attainments with a delightful reliſh.

It is the guard of innocence, and barreth out temptations to vice, to wantonneſs, to vain curioſity and pragmaticalneſs.

It argueth an ingenuous and generous diſpoſition of ſoul; aſpiring to worthy things, and perſuing them in the faireſt way; diſdaining to enjoy the common benefits, or the fruits of other mens labour without deſerving them from the World, and requiting it for them.

It is neceſſary for every condition and ſtation, for every calling, for every relation; no man without it being able to deport himſelf well in any ſtate, to manage any buſineſs, to diſcharge any ſort of duty.

To it the World is indebted for all the culture, which advanceth it above rude and ſordid barbariſm; for whatever in common life is ſtately, or comely, or uſeful, induſtry hath contrived it, induſtry hath compoſed and framed it.

It is recommended to us by all ſort of patterns conſiderable; for all nature is continually buſie and active in tendency toward its proper deſigns; Heaven and Earth do work in unceſſant motion; Every living Creature is employed in progging for its ſuſtenance; The bleſſed Spirits are always on the wing in diſpatching the commands of God, and miniſtring ſuccour to us; God himſelf is ever watchful, and ever buſie in preſerving the World, and providing for the needs of every creature.

The lives of our *Bleſſed Saviour*, of all the *Patriarchs*, the *Prophets*, the *Apoſtles*, the *Saints* in this reſpect have been more exemplary; no vertue being more conſpicuous in their practice than induſtry in performing the hard duties, and painful tasks impoſed on them for the ſervice of God, and the benefit of Mankind.

Such is the vertue upon which I have formerly diſcourſed in general and at large, but ſhall now more ſpecially conſider, according to St. *Paul*'s preſcription, in reference to its moſt proper matter, *buſineſs*, explaining and preſſing it accordingly.

Be not *ſlothful in buſineſs* (that is in diſcharge of it) or *to buſineſs* (that is to undertake it) this is the rule; the nature and needfulneſs whereof we ſhall declare.

By σπουδὴ (*buſineſs*) we may underſtand any object of our care and endeavours which doth require them, and may deſerve them; which by reaſon of its difficulty cannot well be accompliſhed or attained without them; and which is productive of ſome fruit or recompence anſwerable to them; the which hath *operæ cauſam*, a need of labour, and *operæ pretium*, ſome effect worth our pains; if it be not ſuch it is not a due matter of vertuous and laudable induſtry.

There are many things, about which Men with great earneſtneſs employ themſelves, called buſineſs, but not deſerving that name; there are divers ſpurious kinds of induſtry, which may not pretend to commendation, but rather do merit blame; according to that of St. *Chryſoſtome*, *Labour which hath no profit, cannot obtain any praiſe.*

Πόνος ἐὰν κενὸν ἔχῃ, ἔγκωμίε πάντες ἀπεστέρηται. Chryſoſt. *Tom.* 5. *Orat.* 64.

There is a κενοσπουδία, a vain induſtry, and a κακοσπουδία, a naughty induſtry, both agreeing with genuine vertuous induſtry in the act, as implying careful and painful activity, but diſcording from it in object and deſign; and conſequently in worth, and moral eſteem.

Aliud

Aliud agere, to be impertinently buſie, doing that which conduceth to no good purpoſe, is in ſome reſpect worſe than to do nothing, or to forbear all action; for 'tis a poſitive abuſe of our faculties, and trifling with God's gifts; 'tis a throwing away labour and care, things valuable in themſelves; 'tis often a running out of the way, which is worſe than ſtanding ſtill; 'tis a debaſing our reaſon, and declining from our Manhood, nothing being more fooliſh or childiſh, than to be ſolicitous and ſerious about triſles; for who are more buſie and active than children, who are fuller of thoughts and deſigns, or more eager in proſecution of them than they? but all is about ridiculous toies, the ſhadows of buſineſs, ſuggeſted to them by apiſh curioſity, and imitation. Of ſuch induſtry we may underſtand that of the *Preacher*, *The labour of the fooliſh wearieth every one of them*; for that a Man ſoon will be weary of that labour, which yeildeth no profit, or beneficial return.

Ἀλλᾳ γὰρ ἐσχὺν φιλοπονίαν ἢ κενόσπουδον ὁρίζομαι ἐν τοῖς ἔξωθεν ὄντα πολλάκις, ἢ τὴν ἢ μᾶλλον εἰς ἀναγκαῖα πονεῖν καὶ ἀδιαφόρως, ἢ ἔνεκά τε τῶν συμφερόντων καὶ λυσιτελῶν. Plut. *de commun. not.* p. 1049.

Σπουδάζειν καὶ πονεῖν παιδιᾶς χάριν ἢ λίθιον φαίνεται καὶ λίαν παιδικόν. Arift. *Eth.* 10. 6.

Ἡ δὲ μικρὰ σπουδὴ μέμψιν φέρει Plut. *ibid.*

Vid. de glor. Ath. p. 621.

Οἱ σπουδάζοντες ἐν τοῖς γελοίοις ἐν τοῖς σπουδαίοις ἔσονται καταγέλαστοι Cic. Maj. *apud* Plut. *in Apopo.*

Eccles 1c. 15.

But there is another Induſtry worſe than that, when Men are very buſie in deviſing and compaſſing Miſchiefs; an induſtry, whereof the Devil affordeth a great inſtance; for the curſed Fiend is very diligent, ever watching for occaſions to ſupplant us, ever plotting *methods* and means to do harm, ever driving on his miſchievous deſigns with unwearied activity; *going to and fro in the earth*; *running about as a roaring Lion*, looking for prey, and *ſeeking whom he may devour*.

Luk. 22. 31.
2 Cor. 2. 11.
Job 1. 7.
1 Pet. 5. 8.

And his wicked Brood are commonly like him, being *workers of iniquity*, οἱ πονηροὶ *painful men*, οἱ παῦεροι, Men that will do all things; who will ſpare no pains, nor leave any ſtone unturned, for ſatisfying their luſts, and accompliſhing their bad deſigns.

Ἐργάται τῆς ἀδικίας
Luke 13. 27.
Pſal. 6. 8.

So indeed it is, that as no great good, ſo neither can any great miſchief be effected without much pains; And if we conſider either the Characters, or the practices of thoſe, who have been famous Miſchief-doers, the Peſts of Mankind, and Diſturbers of the World, we ſhall find to have been no Sluggards.

Catiline, Marius, *Stilico*, *Cæſar*, &c.

Theſe two ſorts of vain and bad induſtry the Prophet *Iſay* ſeemeth to deſcribe in thoſe Words, *They hatch cockatrice eggs, and weave the ſpiders web*; of which expreſſions one may denote miſchievous, the other frivolous diligence, in contrivance or execution of naughty or vain deſigns; and to them both that of the Prophet *Hoſea* may be referred, *They have ſowed the wind, and they ſhall reap the whirlwind*; guilt, remorſe and puniſhment being the conſequences of both. And of them both common experience doth afford very frequent and obvious inſtances, a great part of humane life being taken up with them. For,

Iſa. 59. 9.
Hoſ. 8. 7.
Eccluſ 34. 2.
Prov. 22. 8.
Hoſ. 10. 13.

How aſſiduouſly intent and eager may we obſerve Men to be at Sports? how ſoon will they riſe to go forth to them? with what conſtancy and patience will they toil in them all the day? how indefatigable are they in riding and running about after a Dog or a Hawk, to catch a poor Beaſt, or ſilly Bird?

How long will Men ſit poring on their Games, diſpenſing with their food and ſleep for it?

Συνείρει καὶ οἱ φιλόκυβοι νύκτας ἡμέρας ἄσιτοι καὶ ἄποτοι, καὶ ἡδονῆς ἡδονὴ πλέκει. Lib. *Orat.* 31.

How

How long and serious attention will Men yeild to a wanton Play, how many Hours will they contentedly sit thereat? What study will Men employ on Jests, and impertinent Wit? how earnest will they be to satisfy their vain Curiosity?

How in such cases do Men forget what they are doing, that Sport should be Sport, not Work; to divert and relax us, not to employ and busie us; to take off our Minds a little, not wholly to take them up; not to exhaust or tire our Spirits, but to refresh and chear them, that they may become more fit for grave and serious Occupations? Τῷ γὰρ ὄντι παίζοντα δεῖ παίζειν. Plut. Jer. 2. 13.

How painful will others be *in hewing them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that will hold no water*; that is, in immoderate pursuit of worldly designs? how studiously will they plod, how restlessly will they trudge, what carking and drudgery will they endure in driving on Projects of Ambition and Avarice? What will not they gladly do or suffer to get a little Preferment, or a little Profit; it was a common practice of old, and sure the World is not greatly mended since the *Psalmist* did thus reflect, *Surely every Man walketh in a vain shew, surely they are disquieted in vain, He heapeth up riches, and cannot tell who shall gather them.* Psal. 39. 6.

How many vigilant, and stout Pursuers are there of Sensuality, and riotous Excess; such as those of whom the Prophet speaketh, *Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink, that continue until night, till wine inflame them?* Isa. 5. 11.

How busie (O shame, O misery; how fiercely busie) are some in accomplishing designs of malice and revenge? how intent are some to overreach, to circumvent, to supplant their Neighbour? how sore pains will some take to seduce, corrupt, or debauch others? how active will some be in sowing strifes, in raising factions, in fomenting disorders in the World? How many industrious slaves hath the Devil, who will spare no pains about any kind of work, which he putteth them to? How many like those of whom the *Wise-man* saith, *their feet run to evil*, and are *swift in running to mischief*; *they sleep not except they have done mischief, and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall.* Ἐννοήσωμεν πῶς ὁ διάβολος ἐπίπονος, πῶς ὀλίγονα, πῶς ἐμίμοχθα, &c. Chrys. ad Pop. 16. Prov. 6. 8. 4. 16.

Now with all these Labourers we may well expostulate in the words of the Prophet; *Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not.* Isa. 55. 2.

Such labours are unworthy of Men, much less do they beseem Christians.

It becometh us not as rational Creatures to employ the excellent gifts of our nature, and noble faculties of our high-born soul, the forces of our mind, the advantages of our fortune, our pretious time, our very care and labour vainly or unprofitably upon any thing base or mean; being that our reason is capable of atchieving great and worthy things, we much debase it by stooping to regard toyes, we do extremely abuse it by working mischief.

Much more doth it misbecome us as Christians (that is Persons devoted to so high a Calling, who have so worthy Employments assigned to us, so glorious hopes, so rich encouragements proposed to us for our work) to spend our thoughts and endeavours on things impertinent to our great design, or mainly thwarting it. Eph. 1. 18.

The proper matter and object of our industry (those false ones being excluded) is true business; or that which is incumbent on a Man to do, either in way of duty, being required by God; or by dictate of reason, as conducing to some good purpose; so that in effect it will turn to ac-

compt, and finally in advantageous return will pay him for his labour of mind or body; that which the *Wiſe-man* did intend, when he adviſed,
Eccles. 9. 10. *Whatever thy hand findeth to doe, doe it with all thy might*; whatever thy hand findeth, that is, whatever by divine appointment (by the command or providence of God) or which upon rational deliberation, doth occur as matter of our action; comprizing every good purpoſe and reaſonable undertaking incident to us.

But our buſineſs, according to the holy *Apoſtle*'s intent, may be ſuppoſed eſpecially to be the work of our calling; to which each Man hath a peculiar obligation; and which therefore is moſt properly his buſineſs, or ἡ πρᾶξις emphatically, *the buſineſs* allotted to him.

Now this buſineſs, our calling, is double; Our general calling, which is common to us all as Chriſtians; and our particular Calling, which peculiarly belongeth to us, as placed in a certain ſtation, either in the Church or State. In both which vocations that we are much obliged and concerned to be induſtrious, ſhall be now my buſineſs to declare.

Ἡ ἄνω κλῆσις Phil. 3. 14.
Κλῆσις ἐπουρανίου. Heb. 3. 1.
Ἁγία κλῆσις. 1 Tim. 1. 9.
(Eph. 1. 18. 2 Theſſ. 1. 11.)

I. As to our general calling (that *ſublime*, that *heavenly*, that *holy* vocation) in which by divine grace, according to the Evangelical Diſpenſation, we are engaged, that neceſſarily requireth, and moſt highly deſerveth from us a great meaſure of induſtry; the nature and deſign of it requireth, the fruit and reſult of it deſerveth our utmoſt diligence; all ſloth is inconſiſtent with diſcharging the duties, with enjoying the hopes, with obtaining the benefits thereof. For,

It is a ſtate of continual work, and is expreſſed in terms importing abun-
Phil. 2. 12. dant, inceſſant, intenſe care and pain; for to be indeed Chriſtians, *We*
Rom. 2. 7. *muſt work out our ſalvation with fear and trembling*; We muſt *by patient continuance in well doing ſeek for glory and honour, and immortality.* We
Col. 1. 10. muſt *walk worthy of the Lord to all well-pleaſing, being fruitful in every*
1 Tim. 6. 18. *good work*; We muſt *be rich in good works,* and *filled with the fruits of*
Phil. 1. 11. *righteouſneſs, which are by Jeſus Chriſt to the praiſe and glory of God; We*
(Joh. 15. 5, *are God's workman-ſhip created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works, which God*
8, 16. *hath before ordained that we ſhould walk in them.*
Jam. 3. 17.)
Eph. 2. 10. We have a ſoul to ſave, and *are appointed* εἰς περιποίησιν σωτηρίας, *to make*
1 Theſſ. 5. 9. *an acquiſt of ſalvation.*

We have a Mind to improve with vertue and wiſedom, qualifying us for entrance into Heaven, for enjoyment of God's favour, for converſation with Angels.

1 Theſſ. 1. 9. As Chriſtians we are aſſumed to be Servants of God, and re-admitted
Rom. 7. 6. into his family, from which for our diſloyalty we had been diſcarded; ſo
6. 22. that as he was our natural Lord, ſo he is now ſuch alſo by ſpecial grace;
Eph. 2. 19. who did make us, who doth maintain us, under whoſe protection, and at whoſe diſpoſal we ſubſiſt; whence we are obliged to be faithfully diligent in his ſervice; We muſt conſtantly wait upon him in devotional addreſſes; We muſt carefully ſtudy to know his pleaſure; we muſt endeaEph. 5. 10. vour exactly to perform his will, and obey his commands; we muſt ſtrive
Rom. 12. 2. to advance his glory, to promote his intereſt, to improve all talents and
Luke 11. 28. advantages committed to us for thoſe purpoſes; we muſt (as St. *Paul*
Matt. 25. 27. expreſſeth it) *always abound in the work of the Lord.*
1 Cor. 15. 58. We muſt alſo look upon our ſelves as ſervants of Chriſt our Redeemer;
Col. 3. 25. who by his blood hath purchaſed us to himſelf, that we might be *zealous*
Eph. 6. 7. *of good works*; performing a ſervice to him, which conſiſteth in a faith-
1 Cor. 7. 23. ful diſcharge of manifold duties; and in purſuance of all vertue; with
6. 20.
Tit. 2. 14.

moſt

moſt intent application of mind, with expedite promptitude, with accurate circumſpection; *giving all diligence* (as St. *Peter* ſpeaketh) in *adding* one vertue to another; *being ready* (as St. *Paul* ſaith) *to every good work*; and *ſeeing that we walk circumſpectly*, or behave our ſelves exactly according to the rules of duty in all our converſation.

2 Pet. 1. 5. Σπουδὴν πᾶσαν παρεισενέγκαντες.
Tit. 3. 1.
Βλέπετε πῶς ἀκριβῶς—Eph. 5. 15.

This ſervice requireth of us aſſiduous attendance on works of Piety and Devotion; that we do *inceſſantly watch to prayers*, that we *always give thanks*, that we *continually do offer up the ſacrifice of praiſe to God.*

Col. 4. 2. Eph. 6. 18. Rom. 12. 12.
1 Theſſ. 5. 17. Luke 18. 1.
1 Theſſ. 5. 18. Eph. 5. 20.
Col. 3. 17.
Heb. 13. 15.

It demandeth from us a continual *labour of charity*; that we *ſerve one another in love*; that we ſhould as *we have opportunity work good to all men*, that we ſhould *always purſue good toward one another, and toward all men.*

1 Theſſ. 1. 3. Κόπου ἀγάπης.
Gal. 5. 13. Δουλεύοντες.
Gal. 6. 10. Ἐργαζώμεθα.

It obligeth us *with all our powers, to purſue peace with all men* (which conſidering our natural peeviſhneſs, pride, and perverſeneſs is often no eaſie task) and that we do σπουδάζειν, *ſtudiouſly endeavour to keep the unity of the ſpirit in the bond of peace.*

1 Theſſ. 5. 13.
Rom. 12. 18. Εἰ δυνατόν.
Heb. 12. 14.
2 Tim. 2. 22.
Eph. 4. 3.

It chargeth on us contentedly and patiently to undergo whatever God doth impoſe of burthen or ſufferance, ſo that *patience hath its perfect work*; and it is a crabbed work, to bend our ſtiff inclinations, to quell our refractary paſſions, to make our ſturdy humour buckle thereto.

Jam. 1. 4.

It doth exact that we ſhould govern and regulate according to very ſtrict and ſevere Laws all the faculties of our ſoul, all the members of our body, all internal motions, and all external actions proceeding from us; that we ſhould check our inclinations, curb our appetites, and compoſe our paſſions; that we ſhould guard our hearts from vain thoughts and bad deſires; that we ſhould bridle our Tongues from evil and from idle diſcourſes; that we ſhould order our ſteps in the ſtreight way of righteouſneſs, not deflecting to the right hand or to the left.

In the diſcharge of this ſervice how many rough difficulties are there to be ſurmounted, how many great obſtacles to be removed, how many ſtout oppoſitions to be encountred, how many potent enemies to be vanquiſhed, how many ſore hardſhips, croſſes and tribulations to be endured?

How ſhrewd a task muſt we find it to circumciſe our hearts, to mortify our earthly Members, to crucify our fleſh with its affections and luſts, to pull out our right eyes, and cut off our right hands, to renounce our worldly intereſts, to hate our neareſt relations, to take up, and bear our croſs; when ever conſcience and duty ſhall call us thereto?

Our calling therefore doth require great induſtry; and the buſineſs of it conſequently is well repreſented by thoſe performances, which demand the greateſt intention, and laborious activity; it is ſtiled *exerciſe* (agoniſtick and aſcetick exerciſe; γύμναζε σαυτὸν πρὸς εὐσέβειαν, *Exerciſe thy ſelf to godlineſs*; and ἐν τούτῳ αὐτὸς ἀσκῶ, *Herein I exerciſe my ſelf to have always a conſcience void of offence toward God and toward men*;) *wreſtling* (ἡμῖν ἡ πάλη, *Our wreſtling is not* (onely) *againſt fleſh and blood, but againſt principalities and powers*;) *running a race* (*Let us run with patience the race that is ſet before us*; *So run that ye may obtain*; *I preſs toward the mark for the prize of the high calling.*) *A warfare, a combating* (*War a good warfare, holding faith and a good conſcience*; *fight the good fight*; *thou therefore endure hardſhip as a good Souldier of Jeſus Chriſt*; *Every Man that ſtriveth for the maſtery is temperate*

Γύμναζε σαυτὸν. 1 Tim. 4. 7.
Ἐν τούτῳ ἀσκῶ. Acts 24. 16.
Heb. 12. 11.
Eph. 6. 12.
1 Cor. 9. 25.
Heb. 12. 1.
1 Cor. 9. 24.
Phil. 3. 14.
2 Tim. 4. 7.
1 Tim. 1. 18. 6. 12.
2 Tim. 4. 7.
2 Tim. 2. 3.

1 Cor. 9. 25. temperate *in all things*;) offering *violence*; (*The Kingdom of Heaven*
Matt. 11. 12. *ſuffereth violence*; *and the violent take it by force*) *watching* (*Let us not*
1 Theſſ. 5. 6. 1 Cor. 16. 13. *ſleep as do others, but let us watch and be ſober*; *Watch ye,*
Matt. 25. 41. 24. 42. Luke 12. 37. *ſtand faſt in the faith, quit you like men, be ſtrong*; *watch*
1 Pet. 5. 8. Apoc. 3. 2. 16. 15. *and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.*)

Hence the Precepts importing the general tenour of Chriſtian practice are uſually couched in terms implying great ſedulity and contention of
Luke 13. ſoul; Ἀγωνίζεσθε, *Strive to enter in at the ſtrait gate*; *Let us labour therefore*
Σπουδάζωμεν. *to enter into that reſt*; *Labour not for the meat that periſheth, but for that*
Heb. 4. 11.
Ἐργάζεσθε. *meat which endureth to everlaſting life. Give diligence to make your calling*
John 6. 27. *and election ſure*; *Gird up the loins of your mind, be ſober and hope to the end*;
Σπουδάσατε 2 Pet. 1. 10. *Wherefore, brethren, ſeeing that ye look for ſuch things, be diligent, that ye*
1 Pet. 1. 13. *may be found of him in peace, without ſpot and blameleſs.*
Luke 12. 35. Such is the work of our general calling, and ſo much induſtry it
Eph. 6. 14. challengeth from us; with great reaſon indeed, for that ſuch work is
2 Pet. 3. 14. needful to our happineſs, and that our labour will certainly be rewarded therewith.

The work indeed of it ſelf is moſt worthy to employ us; doth moſt become us, doth much adorn us, doth beſt befit our divine extraction and large capacity; is the nobleſt, the handſomeſt, the ſweeteſt employ-
John 4. 36. ment that could take us up; but we have alſo the greateſt inducements and encouragements poſſible for our induſtry therein.

There are by the divine bounty and mercy wages aſſigned abundantly correſpondent to our work, yea infinitely ſurpaſſing it; there is πολὺς μισθὸς
Matt. 5. 12. *a great* (or a manifold) *hire* for our ſlender and ſimple performances; there are ſeveral noble prizes highly worth our ſtriving for with our utmoſt ſtrength and contention of ſoul.

In recompence thereof we ſhall aſſuredly gain even here in this tranſitory ſtate the ſpecial favour and love of God, with his conſtant protection and care for our good; his faithful direction, and friendly aſſiſtence to guide us, and up-

Rom. 14. 18. *He that in theſe things ſerveth Chriſt, is acceptable to God, and approved of men.*

hold us in all our ways, to bleſs and proſper our undertakings, to ſupply us in our needs, and comfort us in our diſtreſſes; ſo
Pſal. 34. 9. 84. 11. 33. 19. 37. 3. 19. that we ſhall, *lack nothing* that is good, that no *evil*
Pſal. 91. 10 —— Prov. 12. 21. *ſhall happen to us*, that *all things* ſhall concur and *co-ope-*
Rom. 8. 38. *rate for our benefit.*

We ſhall thereby taſte the ſatisfactions of a calm mind, and a ſound
Col. 3. 15. conſcience, quickned by the conſolations of the divine ſpirit; *the peace of*
Phil. 4. 7. *God ruling in our hearts, which paſſeth all underſtanding.*

We ſhall afterward, when this moment is paſſed over, and our ſhort day's work diſpatched, receive from God's bountiful hand an uncon-
Jam. 1. 12. ceivable affluence of good things, an eternal permanence of life; undi-
1 Pet. 5. 4. ſturbed reſt, *indefectible wealth*, ineffable joy, incorruptible glory, *a king-*
1 Cor. 9. 25. *dom unſhakable.*

John 4. 36. *He* (ſaith our *Lord*) *that reapeth, receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life everlaſting.*

To them (ſaith St. *Paul*) *who by patient continuance in well doing ſeek*
Ἀποδώσει— *for glory, and honour, and immortality, God in recompence will beſtow eternal*
Rom. 2. 6— *life.* And,

I have (ſaith that bleſſed Labourer of himſelf) *fought the good fight,*
2 Tim. 4. 8. *I have finiſhed my courſe, I have kept the faith*; *henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteouſneſs.*

What

What more effectual ſpur or incentive can there be to induſtry in this buſineſs, than to conſider that which St. *Paul* ſo often doth inculcate; *Knowing that whatſoever good thing any man doeth, the ſame* (a recompence for the ſame) *he ſhall receive of the Lord*; and *knowing that* (in conſideration of our ſervice done to the Lord) *of the Lord we ſhall receive the reward of the inheritance?* 2 Cor. 5. 10. Col. 3. 24.

What exhortation can be more firmly grounded, or ſtrongly backed, than is that of the *Apoſtle*, *Therefore my brethren be ye ſtedfaſt, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; foraſmuch as ye know, that your labour is not in vain in the Lord?* 1 Cor. 15. 58.

May it not alſo much encourage us to induſtry to be aſſured, that not onely the kind of our work, but the degree of our labour ſhall be conſidered and requited, in juſt proportion; ſo that the harder we work, the higher we ſhall be rewarded; for, *to each one* (ſaith our *Lord*) *the ſon of man ſhall render a reward* κατὰ τὸ ποῖον αὐτοῦ, *according to his performance*; *Every one* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *ſhall receive* ἴδιον μισθὸν κατὰ τὸν ἴδιον κόπον, *his proper reward according to his proper work*; whence we have reaſon to obſerve St. *John*'s advice, *Look to your ſelves, that ye loſe not thoſe things which ye have gained, but that ye receive a full reward.* Ἀποδώσει ἑκάστῳ. Matt. 16. 27. 1 Cor. 3. 8. Rev. 22. 12. 2. 23. Matt. 25. 21. Luke 19. 12. Μισθὸν πλήρη λάβητε. 2 Joh. 8.

To be negligent or ſlothful in ſuch a caſe, for want of a little care and pains to forfeit ſuch advantages, what a pity, what a folly is it? Were an opportunity preſented by a little minding our buſineſs, and beſtirring our ſelves to procure a fair Eſtate, or a good Preferment, would not he be deemed mad or ſottiſh, who would ſit ſtill, and forego that his advantage? how much more wildneſs is it to be drowſie and ſluggiſh in this caſe, thereby loſing eternal bliſs and glory? well therefore might the *Apoſtle* ſay, *How ſhall we eſcape, if we neglect ſo great ſalvation*? How ſhall we eſcape not onely the ſin, and guilt of baſeſt ingratitude toward him that gratiouſly doth offer it, but the imputation of moſt wretched folly, in being ſo much wanting to our own intereſt and welfare? Heb. 2. 3.

Is it not a ſad thing, a woful ſhame to obſerve what pains Men will throw away upon things of ſmall or no concernment to them? yea what toil and drudgery will they ſuſtain in the ſervice of *Satan*, in purſuit of ſin, in the gratification of their vanities and luſts.

What pains will a covetous Wretch take in ſcraping for Pelf, how will he rack his mind with carking ſolicitude to get, to keep, to ſpare it? how will he tire his ſpirits with reſtleſs travel? how will he pinch his Carcaſe for want of what nature craveth? what infamy and obloquy will he endure for his niggardly parſimony and ſordidneſs.

How much labour will an ambitious Fop undergo for Preferment, or vain Honour? to how many tedious attendances, to how pitiful ſervilities will he ſubmit? what ſore croſſes and diſappointments will he ſwallow, what affronts and indignities will he patiently digeſt, without deſiſting from his enterprize.

How will a Man (as St. *Paul* obſerved) πάντα ἐγκρατεύεται, endure all painful abſtinence and continence in order to the obtaining *a corruptible crown*, a fading Garland of Bays, a puff of vain applauſe? 1 Cor. 9. 25.

What diligence will Men uſe to compaſs the enjoyment of forbidden pleaſures; how watchful in catching opportunities, how eager in queſt of them will they be; what difficulties will they undertake, what hazards will they incur, what damages and inconveniences will they ſuſtain rather than fail of ſatisfying their deſires?

What akings of head and heart, what pangs of mind and gripes of conſcience, what anxieties of regret and fear, will every worker of iniquity undergo? So faithful friends hath this vain and evil World; ſo diligent ſervants hath the accurſed Lord thereof; ſo careful and laborious
Chry. ἀνδρ. 19. will men be to deſtroy and damn themſelves: O that we could be willing to ſpend as much care and pains in the ſervice of our God; O that we were as true friends of our ſelves; O that we could be as induſtrious for our ſalvation; that is, in the buſineſs of our general calling; which having conſidered, let us proceed to the other buſineſs belonging to us, which is

II. The buſineſs of our particular calling; that in reference whereto
1 Cor. 7. 17. St. *Paul* doth preſcribe, *Every man as the Lord hath called him, ſo let him*
1 Cor. 7. 20. *walk. Let every man abide in the ſame calling, wherein he was called*; let him ſo abide, as faithfully to proſecute the work, and diſcharge the duty of
1 Theſſ. 4 11. it; the doing which otherwhere he termeth πράσσειν τὰ ἴδια, *to do our own*
Eph. 4. 28. *buſineſs* (*working with our hands*) and injoineth it in oppoſition to thoſe two great peſts of life, ſloth and pragmatical curioſity; or the neglect of our own, and medling with others Mens affairs.

This the *Apoſtle* nameth *our calling*, becauſe we are called or appointed thereto by divine providence; for he ſuppoſeth and taketh it for granted, that to each Man in this World God hath aſſigned a certain ſtation, unto which peculiar action is ſuted; in which ſtation he biddeth him quietly to
1 Cor. 7. 22. abide, till providence fairly doth tranſlate him, and during his abode therein diligently to execute the work thereof.

Every Man is a Member of a double body, of the civil Commonwealth, and of the Chriſtian Church; in relation to the latter whereof St. *Paul* telleth us (and what he ſaith by parity of reaſon may be referred
1 Cor. 12. 8. likewiſe to the former) that *God hath ſet the members every one in the body,*
Rom. 12. 4. *as it pleaſeth him*; and as it is in the natural, ſo it is in every political and ſpiritual body, every Member hath its proper uſe and function; *All Members* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *have not* τὴν αὐτὴν πρᾶξιν, *the ſame office*, or the ſame work and operation; yet every one hath ſome work. There is no Member deſigned to be idle or uſeleſs, conferring no benefit to the whole; but
Eph. 4. 16. *the whole body* (ſaith the *Apoſtle*) *fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint ſupplieth, according to the effectual working in the meaſure of every part maketh increaſe of the body, unto the edifying it ſelf in love*; each Member doth conſpire and co-operate to the ſtrength, nouriſhment, thriving, and welfare of the whole.

Ἕκάστῳ ὡς ἐμέρισεν Θεός. 1 Cor. 7. 17. Every Man (who continueth a Man; in his ſenſes, or in any good degree of natural integrity) is by God endowed with competent abilities to diſcharge ſome function, uſeful to common good, or at leaſt needful to his own ſuſtenance; to every one ſome talent is committed, which in ſubordination to God's ſervice he may improve, to the benefit of the World, God's temporal, or of the Church God's ſpiritual Kingdom.

It is plainly neceſſary, that the greateſt part of Men ſhould have a determinate work allotted to them, that they may ſupport their life and get their food without being injurious, offenſive, or burthenſome to others; for their living they muſt either follow ſome Trade, or they muſt ſhark and filch, or they muſt beg, or they muſt ſtarve.

And the reſt are obliged to do ſomewhat, conducible to publick good; that they may deſerve to live; for a Drone ſhould not be a among the Bees; nor hath right to devour the Honey: If any Man doth pretend,

or

or preſume that he hath nothing to do but to eat, to ſleep, to play, to laugh; to enjoy his eaſe, his pleaſure, his humour, he thereby doth as it were diſclaim a reaſonable title of living among Men, and ſharing in the fruits of their induſtry; he in St. *Paul*'s judgment ſhould be debarred of food, for *this* (ſaith the Holy *Apoſtle*) *we commanded you, that if any man would not work, neither ſhould he eat.* 2 Theſſ. 3. 10.

Such an one in the Body of Men what is he but an unnatural excreſcence, ſucking nutriment from it, without yeilding ornament or uſe? what is he but a Wen deforming and encombring the body, or a Canker infeſting and corrupting it?

As no Man (at leaſt with decency, convenience and comfort) can live in the World, without being obliged to divers other Men for their help in providing accommodations for him, ſo juſtice and ingenuity (corroborated by divine ſanctions) do require of him, that in commutation he, one way or other, ſhould undertake ſome pains redounding to the benefit of others.

So hath the great Authour of Order diſtributed the Ranks and Offices of Men in order to mutual benefit and comfort; that one Man ſhould plow, another threſh, another grind, another labour at the Forge, another knit or weave; another ſail, another trade, another ſupraviſe all theſe, labouring to keep them all in order and peace; that one ſhould work with his hands and feet, another with his head and tongue; all conſpiring to one common end, the welfare of the whole, and the ſupply of what is uſeful to each particular member; Every Man ſo reciprocally obliging and being obliged; the Prince being obliged to the Husbandman for his Bread, to the Weaver for his Cloaths, to the Maſon for his Palace, to the Smith for his Sword; thoſe being all obliged to him for his vigilant care in protecting them; for their ſecurity in purſuing the Work, and enjoying the fruit of their induſtry.

So every Man hath a calling, and proper buſineſs; whereto that induſtry is required, I need not much to prove, the thing it ſelf in reaſon and experience being ſo clearly evident; for what buſineſs can be well diſpatched, what ſucceſs can be expected to any undertaking, in what calling can any Man thrive without induſtry? what buſineſs is there that will go on of it ſelf, or proceed to any good iſſue, if we do not carefully look to it, ſteadily hold it in its courſe, conſtantly puſh and drive it forward? It is true as in nature, ſo in all affairs, *Nihil movet non motum*, nothing moveth without being moved.

Our own intereſt ſhould move us to be induſtrious in our calling, that we may obtain the good effects, of being ſo in a comfortable and creditable ſubſiſtence; that we may not ſuffer the damages and wants, the diſappointments and diſgraces enſuing on ſloth; but the chief motive ſhould be from piety and conſcience; for that it is a duty which we owe to God. For God having placed us in our ſtation; he having apportioned to us our task, we being in tranſaction of our buſineſs his ſervants, we do owe to him that neceſſary property of good ſervants, without which fidelity cannot ſubſiſt; for how can he be looked on as a faithful ſervant, who doth not effectually perform the work charged on him? or diligently execute the orders of his Maſter. 1 Cor. 4. 2.

St. *Paul* doth injoin ſervants that they ſhould *in all things obey their Maſters*, with conſcientious regard to God, as therein performing ſervice to God, and expecting recompence from him; And of Princes he ſaith, that they in diſpenſation of Juſtice, enacting Laws, impoſing Taxes, and Col. 3. 22. Eph. 6. 5. 1 Cor. 7. 22. 23.

all

Rom. 13. 6. all political adminiſtrations, are *the Miniſters of God,* λειτουργοῦντες, *attending conſtantly upon this very thing*: And if theſe extremes, the higheſt and loweſt of all vocations, are ſervices of God; if the higheſt upon that ſcore be tied to ſo much diligence, then ſurely all middle places, upon the ſame accompt of conſcience toward God, do exact no leſs.

If he that hath one talent, and he that hath ten muſt both improve them for God's intereſt, then he that hath two, or three, or more, is obliged to the ſame duty proportionably.

Every one ſhould conſider the World as the Family of that great *Pater-*
Eph. 3. 15. *familias (of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named)* and himſelf as an officer or ſervant therein, by God's will and deſignation conſtituted in that employment, into which providence hath caſt him; to confer in his order and way ſomewhat toward a proviſion for the maintenance of himſelf, and of his fellow-ſervants. Of a ſuperiour officer our
Matth. 24. 45. Luke 12. 42. Lord ſaith, *Who is that faithful and wiſe ſervant, whom his* Lord *hath made ruler over his houſehold, to give them their meat in due ſeaſon?* So the greateſt Men are as Stewards, Treaſurers, Controllers, or Pourveyers; the reſt are inferiour Servants, in their proper rank and capacity.

And he that with diligence performeth his reſpective duty (be it high and honourable, or mean and contemptible in outward appearance) will
1 Cor. 14. 33. pleaſe God, as keeping good order, and as being uſeful to his ſervice; ſo
Matt. 25. 21--- that upon the reckoning God will ſay to him, *Well done good and faithful ſervant, thou haſt been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy* Lord. But he that doeth otherwiſe (behaving himſelf careleſly, or ſluggiſhly in his buſineſs) will offend God, as committing diſorder, and as being unprofitable;

2 Theſſ. 3. 11. He committeth diſorder according to that of St. *Paul, We hear there are ſome, which walk among you diſorderly, not working at all.* His ſentence
Matt. 25. 26--30. and doom will be, according to our Lord, *O thou wicked and ſlothful ſervant*——*Caſt the unprofitable ſervant into utter darkneſs*; which words are ſpoken in relation to one, who being a flatterer or ſluggard in his calling did not improve the ſpecial talent entruſted with him for God's ſervice.

In fine, if we are conſcientiouſly induſtrious in our vocation, we ſhall aſſuredly find the bleſſing of God thereon; and that he thereby will convey good ſucceſs, comfort, competent wealth, a fair reputation, all deſireable good unto us; for as all theſe things are promiſed to induſtry, ſo the promiſe eſpecially doth belong to that induſtry, which a Man doth exerciſe in an orderly courſe of action in his own way; or rather in God's way, wherein divine providence hath ſet him.

An irregular or impertinent laboriouſneſs, out of a Man's calling or ſphere; a being diligent in other mens affairs, invading their office (as if I a Prieſt will be trading, a Layman preaching) may not claim the benefit of thoſe promiſes, or the bleſſings of induſtry; But a Husbandman, who (with conſcientious regard to God, and confidence in him) is pain-
Prov. 21. 11. ful in tilling his ground, may expect a good Crop, a Merchant who (upon
Prov. 10. 4. 13. 11. the ſame principle, with the like diſpoſition) earneſtly followeth his Trade, may hope for ſafe Voyages and good Markets; A Prince carefully minding his affairs may look for Peace and Proſperity to his Countrey; a Scholar ſtudying hard may be well aſſured of getting knowledge, and finding truth; all who with honeſt diligence conſtantly do purſue their buſineſs may confidently and chearfully hope to reap the advantages ſutable to it from the favourable bleſſing of God. So that we have all reaſon to obſerve the *Apoſtle*'s Precept, *not to be ſlothful in buſineſs.*

I ſhould

I ſhould apply this doctrine to our own caſe, urging its practice by conſiderations peculiar to our Vocation; but having already paſſed the bounds of time, I reſerve the doing it to another opportunity.

Now the God of peace ſanctify you wholly, and make you perfect in every good work to do his will; working in you that which is well pleaſing in his ſight; through our Bleſſed Saviour *Jeſus Chriſt*; to whom for ever be all glory and praiſe. *Amen.* 1 Theſſ. 5. 23. Heb. 13. 20.

SERMON XXI.

Of Induſtry in our particular Calling, as *Gentlemen.*

ROM. XII. 11.

Not ſlothful in buſineſs.

I Have largely treated upon the Duty recommended in this Precept, and urged the obſervance of it in general, at a diſtance; I now intend more particularly and cloſely to apply it, in reference to thoſe Perſons, who ſeem more eſpecially obliged to it, and whoſe obſerving it may prove of greateſt conſequence to publick good; the which application may alſo be moſt ſutable and profitable to this Audience; thoſe Perſons are of two ſorts; the one *Gentlemen*, the other *Scholars*.

I. The *Firſt* place, as civility demandeth, we aſſign to *Gentlemen*; or Perſons of eminent rank in the World, well allied, graced with Honour, and furniſhed with Wealth; the which ſort of Perſons I conceive in a high degree obliged to exerciſe induſtry in buſineſs.

This at firſt hearing may ſeem a little paradoxical and ſtrange; for who have leſs buſineſs than Gentlemen, who do need leſs induſtry, than they? He that hath a fair Eſtate, and can live on his Means, what hath he to doe, what labour or trouble can be exacted of him; what hath he to think on, or trouble his head with, but how to invent Recreations and Paſtimes to divert himſelf, and ſpend his waſt leiſure pleaſantly? Why ſhould not he be allowed to enjoy himſelf, and the benefits, which Nature or Fortune have freely diſpenced to him, as he thinketh beſt, without offence? why may he not ſay with the rich Man in the *Goſpel*, *Soul thou haſt much goods laid up for many years; take thine eaſe, eat, drink, and be merry*? Is it not often ſaid by the *Wiſeman*, that there is *nothing better* Luke 12. 19.

under

Eccles 2. 24. 3. 22. 5. 18. 8. 15. *under the ſun, than that a man ſhould make his ſoul to enjoy good* in a chearful and comfortable fruition of his Eſtate? According to the paſſable notion and definition, *What is a Gentleman but his pleaſure?*

If this be true, if a Gentleman be nothing elſe but this; then truly he is a ſad piece, the moſt inconſiderable, the moſt deſpicable, the moſt pitiful and wretched Creature in the World: If it is his priviledge to do nothing, it is his priviledge to be moſt unhappy; and to be ſo will be his fate, if he live according to it; for he that is of no worth or uſe, who produceth no beneficial fruit, who performeth no ſervice to God, or to the World, what title can he have to happineſs, what capacity thereof? what reward can he claim, what comfort can he feel? to what temptations is he expoſed, what guilts will he incur?

But in truth it is far otherwiſe; to ſuppoſe that a Gentleman is looſe from buſineſs is a great miſtake; for indeed no Man hath more to do, no Man lieth under greater ingagements to induſtry than he.

He is deeply obliged to be continually buſie in more ways than other Men, who have but one ſimple Calling or Occupation allotted to them; and that upon a triple accompt; in reſpect to God, to the World, and to himſelf.

1. He is firſt obliged to continual employment in reſpect to God.

He out of a grateful regard to divine bounty for the eminency of his Station, adorned with dignity and repute, for the plentiful accommodations and comforts of his life, for his exemption from thoſe pinching wants, thoſe meaner cares, thoſe ſordid entertainments, and thoſe toilſome drudgeries, to which other Men are ſubject, is bound to be more diligent in God's ſervice, employing all the advantages of his ſtate to the glory of his munificent Benefactour, to whoſe good Providence alone he doth owe them; for *who maketh him to differ* from another? and *what hath he that he did not receive* from God's free Bounty?

1 Cor. 4. 7.

In proportion to the bulk of his Fortune his heart ſhould be enlarged with a thankful ſenſe of God's goodneſs to him; his Mouth ſhould ever be filled with acknowledgment and praiſe, he ſhould always be ready to expreſs his grateful reſentment of ſo great and peculiar Obligations.

He ſhould dedicate larger portions of that free leiſure which God hath granted to him, in waiting upon God, and conſtant performances of Devotion.

He in frequently reflecting on the particular ample favours of God to him ſhould imitate the holy *Pſalmiſt*, that illuſtrious pattern of great and fortunate Men; ſaying after him, with his ſpirit, and diſpoſition of ſoul;

Pſal. 71. 21. *Thou haſt brought me to great honour, and comforted me on every ſide, therefore will I praiſe thee and thy faithfulneſs, O God.*

Pſal. 30. 7. Pſal. 31. 8. Pſal. 23. 5. Pſal. 30. 12. Pſal. 16. 5. *Lord, by thy favour thou haſt made my mountain to ſtand ſtrong: Thou haſt ſet my feet in a large room: Thou prepareſt a table before me; — thou anointeſt my head with oil, my cup runneth over; — to the end that my glory may ſing praiſe unto thee, and not be ſilent: The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup; thou maintaineſt my lot; The lines are fallen unto me in pleaſant places, yea I have a goodly heritage*; therefore *I will bleſs the Lord.*

In conceiving ſuch Meditations his head and his heart ſhould conſtantly be employed; as alſo in contriving ways of declaring and diſcharging real gratitude; asking himſelf, *What ſhall I render unto the* Lord *for all his benefits?* What ſhall I render to him, not onely as a Man for all the gifts of nature, as a Chriſtian for all the bleſſings of grace, but as a

Pſal. 116. 12.

Gentleman

Gentleman alſo, for the many advantages of this my condition, beyond ſo many of my Brethren, by ſpecial Providence indulged to me?

He hath all the common duties of Piety, of Charity, of Sobriety to diſcharge with fidelity; for being a Gentleman doth not exempt him from being a Chriſtian, but rather more ſtrictly doth engage him to be ſuch in a higher degree than others; It is an obligation peculiarly incumbent on him, in return for God's peculiar favours, to pay God all due obedience, and to exerciſe himſelf in all good works; diſobedience being a more heinous crime in him than in others, who have not ſuch encouragements to ſerve God.

His obedience may be inculcated by thoſe Arguments which *Joſhua* and *Samuel* did uſe in preſſing it on the *Iſraelites*; *Onely* (ſaid *Samuel*) *fear the Lord and ſerve him in truth, for conſider how great things God hath done for you*; and, *I have given you* (ſaith God by *Joſhua*) *a land for which ye did not labour*; *and cities which ye built not*; *and ye dwell in them*; *Of the vineyards and olive-yards which ye planted not, do ye eat*; *Now therefore fear the Lord, and ſerve him in ſincerity and in truth.* 1 Sam. 12. 24. Joſh. 24. 13.

His diſobedience may be aggravated, as *Nehemiah* did that of the *Iſraelites*, *They took ſtrong cities and a fat land, and poſſeſſed houſes full of all goods, wells digged, vineyards and olive-yards, and fruit-trees in abundance*; *ſo they did eat and were filled, and became fat*; *and delighted themſelves in thy great goodneſs*; *nevertheleſs they were diſobedient and rebelled againſt thee, and caſt thy law behind their backs* —— *they have not ſerved thee in their kingdom, and in thy great goodneſs, which thou gaveſt them*; *neither turned they from their wicked works.* Nehem. 9. 25—— (Iſa. 63. 9. Pſal. 106. 6. Jer. 2. 7. Ezek. 16. 7— 1 Sam. 15. 17. 2 Sam. 12. 7. 1 Kings 16.— 26, 35.

A Gentleman hath more talents committed to him, and conſequently more employment required of him; If a ruſtick Labourer, or a mechanick Artiſan hath one Talent, a Gentleman hath ten; He hath innate vigour of ſpirit, and height of courage fortified by uſe, he hath accompliſhment and refinement of Parts by liberal education, he hath the ſuccours of Parentage, Alliance and Friendſhip; he hath Wealth, he hath Honour, he hath Power and Authority, he hath command of time and leiſure; he hath ſo many pretious and uſeful Talents entruſted to him, not to be *wrapped up in a napkin*, or *hidden under-ground*; not to be ſquandred away in private ſatisfactions; but *for negotiation*, to be put out to uſe, to be improved in the moſt advantageous way to God's ſervice: Every Talent doth require a particular care and pains to manage it well. Luke 19. 20. Matt. 25. 25. Πεφυραμένοι. Luke 19. 13. Ἐργάζεσθε.

He particularly is God's Steward, entruſted with God's Subſtance, for the ſuſtenance and ſupply of God's Family; to relieve his Fellow-ſervants in their need, upon ſeaſonable occaſions by Hoſpitality, Mercy, and charitable Beneficence; according to that intimation of our Lord, *Who is that faithful and wiſe ſteward, whom his Lord ſhall make ruler of his houſehold, to give them their portion and meat in due ſeaſon*? And according to thoſe Apoſtolical Precepts, *As every one hath received a gift* (or ſpecial favour,) *even ſo miniſter the ſame to one another, as good ſtewards of the manifold grace of God*; and *Charge the rich in this world,* —— *that they doe good, that they be rich in good works, ready to diſtribute, willing to communicate.* Matt. 25. 16. Matt. 25. 27. Matt. 25. 14. Παρέδωκε τὰ ὑπάρχοντα αὐτῶ —— Luke 12. 42. Χάρισμα. 1 Pet. 4. 10. 1 Tim. 6. 17.

And he that is obliged to purvey for ſo many, and ſo to abound in good works, how can he want buſineſs? how can he pretend to a *Writ of eaſe*?

Surely that Gentleman is very blind, and very barren of invention, who is to ſeek for work fit for him, or cannot eaſily diſcern many employments belonging to him, of great concern and conſequence.

It

It is eaſie to prompt and ſhew him many buſineſſes, indiſpenſably belonging to him, as ſuch.

It is his buſineſs to miniſter relief to his poor Neighbours in their wants and diſtreſſes by his Wealth. It is his buſineſs to direct and adviſe the ignorant, to comfort the afflicted, to reclaim the wicked, and encourage the good by his wiſedom. It is his buſineſs to protect the weak, to reſcue the oppreſſed, to eaſe thoſe who grone under heavy burthens, by his power; to be ſuch a Gentleman and ſo employed as *Job* was; who *did not eat his morſel alone, ſo that the fatherleſs did not eat thereof*; who *did not with-hold the poor from their deſire, or cauſe the eyes of the widow to fail*; who *did not ſee any periſh for want of clothing, or any poor without covering*; who *delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherleſs, and him that had none to help him.*

Job 31. 17, 16. 19. Job 29. 12.

It is his buſineſs to be hoſpitable; kind and helpful to Strangers; following thoſe noble Gentlemen, *Abraham* and *Lot*, who were ſo ready to invite, and entertain Strangers with bountiful courteſie.

1 Pet. 4. 9. Heb. 13. 2. Rom. 12. 13. Gen. 18. 1. 19. 1.

It is his buſineſs to maintain Peace, and appeaſe Diſſenſions among his Neighbours, interpoſing his Counſel and Authority in order thereto; whereto he hath that brave Gentleman *Moſes*, recommended for his Pattern.

Exod. 2. 13. Acts 7. 26.

It is his buſineſs to promote the Welfare and Proſperity of his Countrey with his beſt endeavours, and by all his intereſt; in which practice the Sacred Hiſtory doth propound divers gallant Gentlemen (*Joſeph*, *Moſes*, *Samuel*, *Nehemiah*, *Daniel*, *Mordecay*, and all ſuch renowned Patriots) to guide him.

(Jud. 5, 9.)

It is his buſineſs to govern his Family well; to educate his Children in Piety and Vertue; to keep his Servants in good order.

Joſh. 24. 15. Pſal. 101.——

It is his buſineſs to look to his Eſtate, and to keep it from waſting; that he may ſuſtain the Repute of his Perſon and Quality with decency; that he may be furniſhed with ability to do good, may provide well for his Family, may be hoſpitable, may have wherewith to help his Brethren; for if, according to St. *Paul*'s injunction, a Man ſhould *work with his own hands, that he may have ſomewhat to impart to him that needeth*; then muſt he that hath an Eſtate, be careful to preſerve it, for the ſame good purpoſe.

Μεταδιδόναι. Eph. 4. 28.

It is his buſineſs to cultivate his Mind with Knowledge, with generous Diſpoſitions, with all worthy Accompliſhments befitting his Condition, and qualifying him for honourable Action; ſo that he may excel, and bear himſelf above the vulgar level no leſs in real inward worth, than in exteriour Garb; that he be not a Gentleman merely in Name or ſhew.

It is his buſineſs (and that no ſlight, or eaſie buſineſs) to eſchew the Vices, to check the Paſſions, to withſtand the Temptations, to which his Condition is liable; taking heed, that his Wealth, Honour and Power do not betray him unto Pride, Inſolence, or contempt of his poorer Brethren; unto Injuſtice, or Oppreſſion; unto luxury, and riotous exceſs; unto Sloth, Stupidity, forgetfulneſs of God, and irreligious Profaneneſs.

Ardua namque eſt opibus non cradere mores.

It is a buſineſs eſpecially incumbent on him to be careful of his ways, that they may have good influence on others, who are apt to look upon him as their Guide and Pattern.

He ſhould labour and ſtudy to be a Leader unto Vertue, and a notable Promoter thereof; directing and exciting Men thereto by his exemplary converſation; encouraging them by his Countenance and Authority; rewarding

warding the goodneſs of meaner People by his bounty and favour: He ſhould be ſuch a Gentleman as *Noah*, who *preached righteouſneſs* by his Words and Works before a profane World.

Such particular Affairs hath every Perſon of Quality, Credit, Wealth and Intereſt, allotted to him by God, and laid on him as Duties; the which to diſcharge faithfully will enough employ a Man, and doth require Induſtry, much care, much pains; excluding ſloth and negligence: So that it is impoſſible for a Sluggard to be a worthy Gentleman, vertuouſly diſpoſed, a charitable Neighbour, a good Patriot, a good Husband of his Eſtate; any thing of that, to which God, by ſetting him in ſuch a Station, doth call him.

Thus is a Gentleman obliged to Induſtry in reſpect of God, who juſtly doth exact thoſe labours of Piety, Charity, and all vertue from him. Farther,

2. He hath alſo Obligations to Mankind, demanding induſtry from him, upon accompts of common humanity, equity and ingenuity. For,

How can he fairly ſubſiſt upon the common induſtry of Mankind without bearing a ſhare thereof? how can he well ſatisfy himſelf to dwell ſtatelily, to feed daintily, to be finely clad, to maintain a pompous Retinue merely upon the ſweat and toil of others, without himſelf rendring a compenſation, or making ſome competent returns of Care and Pain, redounding to the good of his Neighbour?

How can he juſtly claim, or reaſonably expect from the World the reſpect agreeable to his Rank, if he doth not by worthy Performances conduce to the benefit of it? Can Men be obliged to regard thoſe, from whom they receive no good?

If no Gentleman be tied to ſerve the Publick, or to yeild help in ſuſtaining the common Burthens, and ſupplying the Needs of Mankind, then is the whole Order merely a Burthen, and an offence to the World; a Race of Drones, a Pack of Ciphers in the Commonwealth, ſtanding for nothing, deſerving no conſideration or regard: And if any are bound, then all are; for why ſhould the whole Burthen lie on ſome, while others are exempted?

It is indeed ſuppoſed, that all are bound thereto, ſeeing that all have Recompences publickly allowed to them upon ſuch conſiderations; divers Reſpects and Priviledges peculiar to the order, grounded upon this ſuppoſition, that they deſerve ſuch advantages by conferring notable benefit to the publick; the which indeed it were an Arrogance to ſeek, and an Iniquity to accept for doing nothing.

It is an unſufferable Pride for any Man to pretend or conceit himſelf to differ ſo much from his Brethren, that he may be allowed to live in eaſe and ſloth, while the reſt of Mankind are ſubject to continual Toil and Trouble. Moreover

3. A Gentleman is bound to be induſtrious for his own ſake; it is a duty, which he oweth to himſelf, to his Honour, to his Intereſt, to his Welfare. He cannot without induſtry continue like himſelf, or maintain the Honour and Repute becoming his Quality and State; or ſecure himſelf from Contempt and Diſgrace; for to be honourable and ſlothful are things inconſiſtent; ſeeing Honour doth not grow, nor can ſubſiſt without undertaking worthy deſigns, conſtantly purſuing them, and happily atchieving them; it is the Fruit and Reward of ſuch Actions, which are not performed with eaſe.

External reſpect, and a ſemblance of Honour, for the ſake of publick

order, may be due to an exteriour Rank, or Title; but to pay this is not to honour the Perſon, but his Title, becauſe it is ſuppoſed that Men of real worth and uſe do bear it; or leaſt by refuſing it to one, the whole order may ſeem diſreſpected; but yet true Honour, or mental Eſteem is not due upon ſuch accompts; nor is it poſſible to render it unto any Perſon, who doth not by worthy Qualities, and good Deeds appear to merit it.

Nor can a Gentleman without Induſtry uphold his real Intereſts againſt the attempts of Envy, of Treachery, of Flattery, of Sycophantry, of Avarice, to which his condition is obnoxious; to preſerve his Wealth and Eſtate, which are the ſupports of his Quality, he muſt endure Care and Pains; otherwiſe he will by greedy Harpyes, and crafty Lurchers be rifled or cozened of his Subſtance; it will of its ſelf go to wreck, and be imbezill'd by negligence.

He cannot without Induſtry guard his perſonal Welfare from manifold Inconveniences, Moleſtations, and Miſchiefs; Idleneſs it ſelf will be very troubleſome, and irkſome to him. His time will lie upon his hands, as a peſtring Encumbrance. His Mind will be infeſted with various Diſtractions and Diſtempers; vain and ſad Thoughts, foul Luſts, and unquiet Paſſions will ſpring up therein, as Weeds in a neglected Soil. His Body will languiſh, and become deſtitute of Health, of Vigour, of Activity, for want of due exerciſe. All the Miſchiefs, which naturally do ſpring from Sloth and Stupidity will ſeiſe upon him.

4. Thus upon various accompts a Gentleman is engaged to Buſineſs, and concerned to exerciſe Induſtry therein; we may add, that indeed the very nature of Gentility, or the true notion of a Gentleman doth imply ſo much.

For what, I pray, is a Gentleman, what Properties hath he, what Qualities are characteriſtical or peculiar to him, whereby he is diſtinguiſhed from others, and raiſed above the vulgar? Are they not eſpecially two, *Courage* and *Courteſie*? which he that wanteth is not otherwiſe than equivocally a Gentleman, as an Image or a Carcaſe is a Man; without which Gentility in a conſpicuous degree is no more than a vain ſhew, or an empty Name; And theſe plainly do involve induſtry, do exclude ſlothfulneſs; for *Courage* doth prompt boldly to undertake, and reſolutely to diſpatch great Enterprizes, and Employments of difficulty; It is not ſeen in a flaunting Garb, or ſtrutting Deportment; not in Hectorly, Ruffian-like ſwaggering or huffing; not in high Looks, or big Words; but in ſtout and gallant Deeds, employing vigour of Mind and Heart to atchieve them; how can a man otherwiſe approve himſelf for couragious, than by ſignalizing himſelf in ſuch a way?

And for *Courteſie*, how otherwiſe can it be well diſplayed, than in ſedulous activity for the good of men? It ſurely doth not conſiſt in modiſh forms of Addreſs, or complemental Expreſſions, or hollow Profeſſions (commonly void of meaning, or of ſincerity;) but in real Performances of Beneficence, when occaſion doth envite, and in waiting for opportunities to do good; the which practice is accompanied with ſome care and pain, adding a price to it; for an eaſie courteſie is therefore ſmall becauſe eaſie, and may be deemed to proceed rather from ordinary humanity, than from gentile diſpoſition; ſo that in fine he alone doth appear truely a Gentleman, who hath the Heart to undergo hard tasks for publick good, and willingly taketh pains to oblige his Neighbours and Friends.

5. The Work indeed of Gentlemen is not ſo groſs, but it may be as ſmart and painful as any other. For all hard work is not manual; there

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are other Inſtruments of action beſide the Plow, the Spade, the Hammer, the Shuttle; nor doth every Work produce ſweat, and viſible tiring of Body; the Head may work hard in contrivance of good deſigns, the Tongue may be very active in diſpenſing advice, perſwaſion, comfort, and edification in vertue; A Man may beſtir himſelf in *going about to do good*; theſe are Works employing the cleanly induſtry of a Gentleman.

6. In ſuch Works it was, that the trueſt and greateſt Pattern of Gentility that ever was did employ himſelf: Who was that: Even our Lord himſelf; for he had no particular Trade, or Profeſſion; no Man can be more looſe from any engagement to the World than he was; no Man had leſs need of buſineſs, or pains-taking than he; for he had a vaſt Eſtate, being *heir of all things*, all the World being at his diſpoſal, yea infinitely more, it being in his power with a Word to create whatever he would to ſerve his need, or ſatisfy his Pleaſure; Omnipotency being his treaſure and ſupply; he had a Retinue of Angels to wait on him, and miniſter to him; whatever ſufficiency any Man can fanſie to himſelf to diſpence with his taking pains, that had he in a far higher degree; Yet did he find work for himſelf, and continually was employed in performing ſervice to God, and imparting benefits to Men; nor was ever induſtry exerciſed upon Earth comparable to his. (Iſa. 53. 11.)

Gentlemen therefore would do well, to make him the Pattern of their life, to whoſe induſtry they muſt be beholden for their ſalvation: In order whereto we recommend them to his Grace.

SERMON XXII.

Of Induſtry in our particular Calling, as *Scholars*.

ROM. XII. 11.

Not ſlothful in buſineſs.

I Proceed to the other ſort of Perſons, whom we did propound, namely

II. *Scholars*, and that on them particularly great engagements do lie to be induſtrious, is moſt evident, from various Conſiderations.

The nature and deſign of this calling doth ſuppoſe induſtry; the matter, and extent of it doth require Induſtry; the worth of it doth highly deſerve Induſtry. We are in ſpecial gratitude to God, in charity to Men, in due regard to our ſelves bound unto it.

1. Firſt, I ſay, the nature and deſign of our calling doth ſuppoſe induſtry: *There is* (ſaith the divine *Preacher*) *a man, whoſe labour is in wiſedom, in knowledge, and in equity*; Such men are Scholars, ſo that we are indeed no Scholars, but abſurd Uſurpers of the Name, if we are not laborious; for what is a Scholar, but one who retireth his Perſon, and avocateth his Mind from other Occupations, and worldly Entertainments, that he may σχολάζειν, *vacare ſtudiis*, employ his mind and leiſure on ſtudy and learning, in the ſearch of truth, the queſt of knowledge, the improvement of his reaſon. Wherefore an idle Scholar, a lazy ſtudent, a ſluggiſh man of learning is nonſenſe.

Eccles 2. 21.

Ἡ σοφία γραμματέως ἐν δικαιείᾳ σχολῆς. Eccius 38. 24.

What is learning but a diligent attendance to inſtruction of Maſters, skilled in any Knowledge, and conveying their Notions to us in Word or Writing?

What is ſtudy, but an earneſt, ſteady, perſevering application of mind to ſome matter, on which we fix our thoughts, with intent to ſee through it; what in *Solomon*'s language are theſe *Scholaſtick* occupations, but *inclining the ear*, and *applying our heart to underſtanding*? than which commonly there is nothing more laborious, more ſtraining nature, and more tiring our Spirits; whence it is well compared to the moſt painful exerciſes of body and ſoul.

Prov. 2. 2.

The *Wiſe-man* adviſing men to ſeek wiſedom, the which is the proper deſign of our calling, doth intimate that work to be like digging in the mines for ſilver, and like ſearching all about for concealed treaſure; than which there can hardly be any more difficult and painful task, *If* (ſaith he) *thou ſeekeſt her as ſilver, and ſearcheſt for her as for hid treaſures, then ſhalt thou underſtand* — Otherwhere he compareth the ſame work to aſſiduous watching and waiting, like that of a Guard or a Client, which are the greateſt inſtances of diligence, *Bleſſed* (ſaith he; or wiſedom by him ſaith, bleſſed) *is the Man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the poſts of my doors.*

Prov. 4.

Prov. 8. 34.

Wherefore if we will approve our ſelves to be what we are called, and what we pretend to be, if we will avoid being Impoſtours, aſſuming a name not due to us, we muſt not be ſlothful. Farther,

2. The matter and extent of our buſineſs doth require Induſtry from us: The matter of it, which is truth and knowledge; the extent, which is very large and comprehenſive, taking in all truth, all knowledge; worthy our ſtudy, and uſeful for the deſigns of it.

Our buſineſs is to find truth; the which (even in matters of high importance) is not eaſily to be diſcovered; being as a Vein of Silver, encompaſſed with Earth, and mixed with Droſs) deeply laid in the obſcurity of things, wrapt up in falſe appearances, entangled with objections, and perplexed with debates; being therefore not readily diſcoverable; eſpecially by minds clouded with prejudices, luſts, paſſions, partial affections, appetites of honour and intereſt; whence to deſcry it requireth the moſt curious obſervation, and ſolicitous circumſpection that can be; together with great pains in the preparation and purgation of our minds toward the enquiry of it.

Our buſineſs is to attain knowledge, not concerning obvious and vulgar matters, but about ſublime, abſtruſe, intricate and knotty ſubjects, remote from common obſervation and ſenſe; to get ſure and exact notions about which will try the beſt forces of our mind with their utmoſt endeavours; in firmly ſetling principles, in ſtrictly deducing conſequences, in orderly digeſting concluſions, in faithfully retaining what we learn by our contemplation and ſtudy.

And

And if to get a competent knowledge about a few things, or to be reaſonably skilful in any ſort of learning, be difficult, how much induſtry doth it require to be well ſeen in many, or to have waded through the vaſt compaſs of learning, in no part whereof a Scholar may conveniently or handſomely be ignorant; ſeeing there is ſuch a connexion of things, and dependance of notions, that one part of learning doth confer light to another, that a man can hardly well underſtand any thing without knowing divers other things; that he will be a lame Scholar, who hath not an inſight into many kinds of knowledge, that he can hardly be a good Scholar, who is not a general one.

To underſtand ſo many Languages (which are the ſhells of knowledge,) to comprehend ſo many Sciences (full of various Theoremes and Problemes) to peruſe ſo many Hiſtories (of ancient and modern times;) to know the World, both natural and humane; to be acquainted with the various inventions, inquiries, opinions and controverſies of learned Men; to skill the Arts of expreſſing our Mind, and imparting our conceptions with advantage, ſo as to inſtruct or perſwade others; theſe are works indeed, which will exerciſe and ſtrain our faculties (ourreaſon, our fancy, our memory) in painful ſtudy.

The knowledge of ſuch things is not innate to us; it doth not of it ſelf ſpring up in our Minds; it is not any-wiſe incident by chance, or infuſed by grace (except rarely by miracle;) common obſervation doth not produce it; it cannot be purchaſed at any rate, except by that, for which it was ſaid of old, *the gods ſell all things*, that is for pains; without which the beſt wit and greateſt capacity may not render a Man learned, as the beſt Soil will not yeild good fruit or grain, if they be not planted or ſown therein. *Dii laboribus omnia vendunt.*

Conſider, if you pleaſe, what a Scholar *Solomon* was; Beſide his skill in *politicks*, which was his principal faculty and profeſſion, whereby he did with admirable dexterity and prudence manage the affairs of that great Kingdom, *judging his people, and diſcerning what was good and bad*; accurately diſpenſing juſtice; ſetling his Countrey in a moſt flouriſhing ſtate of peace, order, plenty and wealth; largely extending his territory; ſo that his wiſedom of this kind was famous over the earth; beſide, I ſay, this civil wiſedom, he had an exquiſite skill in natural *Philoſophy* and *Medicine*, for *He ſpake of trees* (or plants) *from the cedar that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyſop that ſpringeth out of the wall; he ſpake alſo of beaſts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fiſhes.* 1 Kings 3. 9. 1 Kings 4. 20. 25. 10. 27. 1 Kings 4. 21 —— 1 Kings 10. 6, 24. 1 Kings 4. 33.

He was well verſed in the *Mathematicks*; for it is ſaid, *Solomon's wiſedom excelled the wiſedom of all the children of the Eaſt-countrey, and all the wiſedom of Egypt*; the wiſedom of which Nations did conſiſt in thoſe Sciences. And of his *Mechanick* skill he left for a monument the moſt glorious ſtructure that ever ſtood on earth. 1 Kings 4. 30.

He was very skilful in Poetry and Muſick, for he did himſelf *compoſe above a thouſand ſongs*; whereof one yet extant declareth the loftineſs of his fancy, the richneſs of his vein, and the elegancy of his ſtyle. 1 Kings 4. 32.

He had great ability in Rhetorick; according to that in *Wiſedom*, *God granted me to ſpeak as I would*; and that in *Eccleſiaſtes*, *The Preacher ſought to find out acceptable words*; a great inſtance of which faculty we have in that admirable Prayer of his compoſure, at the dedication of the Temple. Sap. 7. 15: Eccles 12. 10. 1 Kings 8.

He did wonderfully excel in *Ethicks*; concerning which *he ſpake three thouſand Proverbs*, or moral Aphoriſms; and *Moreover* (ſaith *Eccleſiaſtes*) *becauſe the Preacher was wiſe, he ſtill taught the people knowledge; yea he gave* 1 Kings 4. 32 Eccles 12. 9.

good heed, and ſought out, and ſet in order many proverbs; the which did contain a great variety of notable obſervations, and uſeful directions for common life, couched in pithy expreſſions.

As for *Theology*, as the ſtudy of that was the chief ſtudy to which he exhorteth others (as to *the head*, or principal part *of wiſedom*) ſo queſtionleſs he was himſelf moſt converſant therein; for proof whereof he did leave ſo many excellent Theoremes and Precepts of Divinity to us.

Prov. 2. 5.

In fine, there is no ſort of knowledge, to which he did not apply his ſtudy; witneſs himſelf in thoſe words, *I gave my heart to ſeek and ſearch out by wiſedom concerning all things, that are done under heaven.*

Eccles 1. 13.

Such a Scholar was he; and ſuch if we have a noble ambition to be, we muſt uſe the courſe he did; which was firſt in his heart to prefer wiſedom before all worldly things; then to pray to God for it, or for his bleſſing in our queſt of it; then to uſe the means of attaining it, diligent ſearching, and hard ſtudy; for that this was his method he telleth us, *I* (ſaith he) *applyed my heart, to know, and to ſearch, and to ſeek out wiſedom, and the reaſon of things.*

Eccles 7. 25.

Such conſiderations ſhew the neceſſity of induſtry for a Scholar; but

3. The worth, and excellency, and great utility, together with the pleaſantneſs of his vocation, deſerving the higheſt induſtry, do ſuperadd much obligation thereto.

We are much bound to be diligent out of ingenuity, and in gratitude to God, who by his gratious providence hath aſſigned to us a calling ſo worthy, an employment ſo comfortable, a way of life no leſs commodious, beneficial and delightful to our ſelves, than ſerviceable to God, and uſeful for the World.

If we had our option and choice, what calling would we deſire before this of any whereto Men are affixed? how could we better employ our mind, or place our labour, or ſpend our time, or paſs our pilgrimage in in this World, than in ſcholaſtical occupations?

It were hard to reckon up, or to expreſs the numberleſs great advantages of this calling, I ſhall therefore onely touch ſome, which readily fall under my thought, recommending its value to us.

It is a calling, the deſign whereof conſpireth with the general end of our being; the perfection of our nature in its endowments, and the fruition of it in its beſt operations.

It is a calling, which doth not employ us in bodily toil, in worldly care, in purſuit of trivial affairs, in ſordid drudgeries; but in thoſe angelical operations of ſoul, the contemplation of truth, and attainment of wiſedom; which are the worthieſt exerciſes of our reaſon, and ſweeteſt entertainments of our mind; the moſt pretious wealth, and moſt beautiful ornaments of our ſoul; whereby our faculties are improved, are poliſhed and refined, are enlarged in their power and uſe by habitual acceſſions: the which are conducible to our own greateſt profit and benefit, as ſerving to rectify our wills, to compoſe our affections, to guide our lives in the ways of vertue, to bring us unto felicity.

Prov. 2. 4, 10.

It is a calling, which being duly followed will moſt ſever us from the vulgar ſort of Men, and advance us above the common pitch; enduing us with light to ſee farther than other Men, diſpoſing us to affect better things, and to ſlight thoſe meaner objects of humane deſire, on which men commonly dote: freeing us from the erroneous conceits, and from the perverſe affections of common people. It is ſaid διπλᾶν ὀφθαλμὸν ἔχουσιν οἱ μαθήματα γεγραμμένα, *men of learning are double-ſighted*; but it is true, that in many caſes they ſee infinitely farther than a vulgar ſight doth reach; and if a man by

ſerious

ſerious ſtudy doth acquire a clear and ſolid judgment of things, ſo as to aſſign to each its due weight and price; if he accordingly be inclined in his heart to affect and purſue them; if from clear and right notions of things a meek and ingenuous temper of mind, a command and moderation of paſſions, a firm integrity, and a cordial love of goodneſs do ſpring, he thereby becometh another kind of thing, much different from thoſe brutiſh men (beaſts of the people) who blindly follow the motions of their ſenſual appetite, or the ſuggeſtions of their fancy, or their miſtaken prejudices.

It is a calling which hath theſe conſiderable advantages, that by vertue of improvement therein, we can ſee with our own eyes, and guide our ſelves by our own reaſons, not being led blindfold about, or depending precariouſly on the conduct of others in matrers of higheſt concern to us. That we are exempted from giddy credulity, from wavering levity, from fond admiration of perſons and things, being able to diſtinguiſh of things, and to ſettle our judgments about them, and to get an intimate acquaintance with them, aſſuring to us their true nature and worth: that we are alſo thereby reſcued from admiring our ſelves, and that overweening ſelf-conceitedneſs, of which the *Wiſe-man* ſaith, *The ſluggard is wiſer in his own conceit, than ſeven men that can render a reaſon.* Prov. 26. 16.

It is a calling, whereby we are qualified and enabled to do God ſervice; to gratify his deſires, to promote his honour, to advance his intereſts; to render his name glorious in the World; by teaching, maintaining and propagating his truth; by perſwading men to render their due love, reverence and obedience to him; than which we can have no more honourable or ſatisfactory employment; more like to that of the glorious and bleſſed Spirits.

It is a calling, the due proſecution whereof doth ingratiate us with God, and procureth his favour; rendring us fit objects of his love, and entitling us thereto in regard to our Qualities, and recompence of our works; for *God loveth none but him that dwelleth with wiſedom*; and, *So ſhalt thou find favour and good underſtanding in the ſight of God and man.* Sap. 7. 28. (Pſal. 5. 5.) Prov. 3. 4.

It is a calling, whereby with greateſt advantage we may benefit men, and deſerve well of the World; drawing men to the knowledge and ſervice of God, reclaiming them from errour and ſin, reſcuing them from miſery, and conducting them to happineſs; by clear inſtruction, by faithful admonition, by powerful exhortation; And what can be more noble, than to be the lights of the World, the guides of practice to Men, the Authours of ſo much good, ſo egregious Benefactours to Mankind?

It is a calling moſt exempt from the cares, the croſſes, the turmoiles, the factious jars, the anxious intrigues, the vexatious moleſtations of the World; its buſineſs lying out of the road of thoſe miſchiefs, wholly lying in ſolitary retirement, or being tranſacted in the moſt innocent, and ingenuous company.

It is a calling leaſt ſubject to any danger or diſappointment; wherein we may well be aſſured not to miſcarry or loſe our labour; for the Merchant indeed by manifold accidents may loſe his Voyage, or find a bad Market; the Husbandman may plow and ſow in vain; but the Student hardly can fail of improving his ſtock, and reaping a good crop of knowledge; eſpecially if he ſtudy with a conſcientious mind, and pious reverence to God, imploring his gratious help and bleſſing.

It is a calling, the induſtry uſed wherein doth abundantly recompence it ſelf, by the pleaſure and ſweetneſs which it carrieth in it; ſo that the more pains one taketh, the more delight he findeth, feeling himſelf proportionably to grow in knowledge; and that his work becometh continually more eaſie to him.

It is

It is a calling the buſineſs whereof doth ſo exerciſe as not to weary, ſo entertain as not to cloy us; being not (as other occupations are) a drawing in a mill, or a nauſeous (tedious) repetition of the ſame work; but a continual progreſs toward freſh objects; our mind not being ſtaked to one or a few poor matters, but having immenſe fields of contemplation, wherein it may everlaſtingly expatiate, with great proficiency and pleaſure.

Τρέφει δ' αἰεὶ πολλὰ διδασκομένῳ.

It is a calling, which doth ever afford plentiful fruit, even in regard to the conveniences of this preſent, and temporal ſtate; the which ſufficiently will requite the pains expended thereon: for if we be honeſtly induſtrious we ſhall not want ſucceſs; and ſucceeding we ſhall not want a competence of wealth, of reputation, of intereſt in the world: For concerning wiſedom, which is the reſult of honeſt ſtudy, the *Wiſe-man* telleth us, *Riches and honour are with her, yea durable riches, and righteouſneſs: Length of days are in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honour: Exalt her, and ſhe ſhall promote thee, ſhe ſhall bring thee to honour, when thou doſt embrace her; ſhe ſhall give to thine head an ornament of grace, a crown of glory ſhall ſhe deliver to thee*; In common experience, the wealth of the mind doth qualifie for employments, which have good recompences annexed to them; and neither God nor man will ſuffer him long to want, who is endowed with worthy accompliſhments of knowledge; It was a ridiculous providence in *Nero* that if he ſhould chance to loſe his Empire, he might live by fidling; yet his Motto was good; and *Dionyſius*, another Tyrant, found the benefit of it; τὸ τεχνίον γαῖα τρέφει, he that hath any good art, hath therein an Eſtate, and Land in every place; he is ſecured againſt being reduced to extremity of any misfortune: *Wiſedom* (ſaith the *Wiſe-man*) *is a defence, and money is a defence; but the excellency of knowledge is, that wiſedom giveth life to them that have it*: Money is a defence, of which fortune may bereave us; but wiſedom is beyond its attacks; being a treaſure ſeated in a place inacceſſible to external impreſſions.

Prov. 8. 18. 3. 16. 4. 9, 10.

Eccl. 7. 12.

And as a learned Man cannot be deſtitute of ſubſtance; ſo he cannot want credit; having ſuch an ornament, than which none hath a more general eſtimation; and which can be of low rate onely among that ſort of folk, to whom *Solomon* ſaith, *How long, ye ſimple ones, will ye love ſimplicity*; —— *and fools hate knowledge?* It is that which recommendeth a man in all company, and procureth regard, every one yeilding * attention and acceptance to inſtructive, neat, appoſite diſcourſe (that which the *Scripture* calleth *acceptable, pleaſant, gratious words*) Men think themſelves obliged thereby by receiving information, and ſatisfaction, from it; and accordingly *Every man* (ſaith the *Wiſe-man*) *ſhall kiſs his lips, that giveth a right anſwer*; and——*for the grace of his lips the King ſhall be his friend*; and, *The words of a wiſe-man's mouth are gratious.* It is that an eminency wherein purchaſeth laſting fame, and a life after death, in the good memory and opinion of poſterity; *Many ſhall commend his underſtanding, and ſo long as the world endureth, it ſhall not be blotted out, his memorial ſhall not depart away, and his name ſhall live from generation to generation.* A fame no leſs great, and far more innocent than acts of chivalry and Martial proweſs; for is not *Ariſtotle* as renowned for teaching the World with his Pen, as *Alexander* for conquering it with his Sword; is not one far oftner mentioned, than the other; do not Men hold themſelves much more obliged to the learning of the Philoſopher, than to the valour of the Warriour? Indeed the fame of all others is indebted to the pains of the Scholar, and could not ſubſiſt but with and by his fame, *Dignum laude virum Muſa vetat mori*; learning conſecrateth it ſelf and its ſubject together, to immortal remembrance.

Prov. 12. 8. *A man ſhall be commended according to the wiſdom.*

Prov. 1. 22. 1. 7. * Prov. 22. 17.

Prov. 24. 26. Prov. 22. 15, 26. Eccles 10. 12.

Ecclus 39. 9.

It

It is a calling that fitteth a man for all conditions and fortunes; so that he can enjoy prosperity with moderation, and sustain adversity with comfort; He that loveth a Book will never want a faithful friend, a wholsome counsellour, a chearful companion, an effectual comforter. By study, by reading, by thinking one may innocently divert, and pleasantly entertain himself, as in all weathers, so in all fortunes.

In fine, it is a calling, which *Solomon*, who had curiously observed and exactly compared and scann'd, by reason and by experience all other occupations and ways of life, did prefer above all others; and we may presume would sooner have parted with his royal state than with his learning; for *Wisedom* (saith he) *is the principal thing, therefore get wisedom, and with all thy getting get understanding*; and *Then I saw* (then, that is after a serious disquisition and discussion of things, I saw) *that wisedom exceedeth folly* (that is, knowledge excelleth ignorance) *as light excelleth darkness*. Prov. 4. 7. Eccles 2. 13.

These things and much more may be said of learning in general; but if more distinctly we survey each part and each object of it, we shall find, that each doth yeild considerable emoluments, and delights; benefit to our soul, advantage to our life, satisfaction to our mind.

The observation of things, and collection of experiments how doth it enrich the mind with *Ideas*, and breed a kind of familiar acquaintance with all things, so that nothing doth surprize us, or strike our mind with astonishment and admiration? and if our *eye be not satisfied with seeing, nor our ear filled with hearing*, how much less is our mind satiated with the pleasures of speculating and observing that immense variety of objects subject to its view. Eccles 1. 8.

The exercise of our mind in rational discursiveness, about things, in quest of truth; canvasing questions, examining arguments for and against; how greatly doth it better us, fortifying our natural parts, enabling us to fix our thoughts on objects without roving, enuring us to weigh and resolve, and judge well about matters proposed; preserving us from being easily abused by captious fallacies, gull'd by specious pretences, tossed about with every doubt or objection started before us?

Invention of any kind (in discerning the causes of abstruse effects, in resolving hard problemes, in demonstrating theoremes, in framing compositures of witty description, or forcible perswasion) how much doth it exceed the pleasure of hunting for any game, or of combating for any victory? do any man's children so much please him, as these creatures of his brain?

The reading of Books what is it, but conversing with the wisest men of all ages, and all countries, who thereby communicate to us their most deliberate thoughts, choicest notions, and best inventions, couched in good expression, and digested in exact method.

And as to the particular matters or objects of study, all have their use and pleasure. I shall onely touch them.

The very initial studies of *Tongues* and *Grammatical* Literature are very profitable and necessary, as the inlets to knowledge, whereby we are enabled to understand wise men speaking their sense in their own terms and lively strain; whereby especially we are assisted to drink sacred knowledge out of the fountains, the divine Oracles.

Luther would not part with a little *Hebrew* he had for all the *Turkish* Empire.

Rhetorick, or the part of conveying our thoughts to others by speech with advantages of clearness, force and elegancy, so as to instruct, to perswade, to delight the auditours; of how great benefit is it, if it be well used? how much may it conduce to the service of God, and edification

cation of men? what hath been a more effectual inſtrument of doing good, and working wonders not onely in the World, but in the Church? how many ſouls have been converted from errour, vanity and vice to truth, ſoberneſs and vertue, by an eloquent *Apollos*, a *Baſil*, a *Chryſoſtome*?

Ἀνὴρ λόγιος, δυνατὸς... Acts 18. 24.

The peruſal of *Hiſtory*, how pleaſant illumination of mind, how uſeful direction of life, how ſpritely incentives to vertue doth it afford? how doth it ſupply the room of experience, and furniſh us with prudence at the expence of others; informing us about the ways of action, and the conſequences thereof by examples, without our own danger or trouble? how may it inſtruct and encourage us in piety, while therein we trace the paths of God in Men, or obſerve the methods of divine providence, how the Lord and Judge of the World in due ſeaſon protecteth, proſpereth, bleſſeth, rewardeth innocence and integrity; how he croſſeth, defeateth, blaſteth, curſeth, puniſheth iniquity and outrage; managing things with admirable temper of wiſedom to the good of mankind, and advancement of his own glory?

The *Mathematical* Sciences, how pleaſant is the ſpeculation of them to the mind, how uſeful is the practice to common life? how do they whet and excite the mind? how do they inure it to ſtrict reaſoning, and patient meditation?

Natural Philoſophy, the contemplation of this great Theatre, or viſible ſyſteme preſented before us; obſerving the various appearances therein, and inquiring into their cauſes; reflecting on the order, connexion, and harmony of things; conſidering their original ſource, and their final deſign; how doth it enlarge our minds, and advance them above vulgar amuſements, and the admiration of thoſe petty things, about which men cark and bicker? how may it ſerve to work in us pious affections of admiration, reverence and love toward our great Creatour, whoſe *eternal divinity is clearly ſeen*, whoſe *glory is declared*, whoſe tranſcendent perfections, and attributes of immenſe power, wiſedom and goodneſs are conſpicuouſly diſplayed, whoſe particular kindneſs toward us men doth evidently ſhine in thoſe his works of nature?

Rom. 1. 20. Pſal. 19. 1. 1 ſ. l. 8.

The ſtudy of *Moral Philoſophy* how exceedingly beneficial may it be to us, ſuggeſting to us the dictates of reaſon concerning the nature and faculties of our ſoul, the chief good and end of our life, the way and means of attaining happineſs; the beſt rules and methods of practice; the diſtinctions between good and evil; the nature of each vertue, and motives to embrace it; the rank wherein we ſtand in the World, and the duties proper to our relations; by rightly underſtanding and eſtimating which things we may know how to behave our ſelves decently and ſoberly toward our ſelves, juſtly and prudently toward our neighbours; we may learn to correct our inclinations, to regulate our appetites, to moderate our paſſions, to govern our actions, to conduct and wield all our practice well in proſecution of our end; ſo as to enjoy our being and conveniences of life in conſtant quiet and peace, with tranquillity and ſatisfaction of mind?

But eſpecially the ſtudy of *Theology* how numberleſs unexpreſſible advantages doth it yeild? for

It enlightneth our minds with the beſt knowledge concerning the moſt high and worthy objects, in order to the moſt happy end, with the firmeſt aſſurance.

It certainly and perfectly doth inform us concerning the nature and attributes, the will and intentions, the works and providence of God.

It fully declareth to us our own nature, our original, our deſigned end,

our

our whole duty, our certain way of attaining eternal life, and felicity.

It exactly teacheth us how we should demean our selves in all respects, piously toward God, justly and charitably toward our neighbour, soberly toward our selves; without blame in the World, with satisfaction of our conscience, with assured hope of blessed rewards.

It proposeth those encouragements, and exhibiteth assurances of those helps, which serve potently to engage us in all good practice.

It setteth before us a most complete and lively pattern of all goodness; apt most clearly to direct, most strongly to excite, most obligingly to engage us thereto; especially instructing and inclining to the practice of the most high and hard duties, meekness, humility, patience, self-denial, contempt of all worldly vanities.

It discovereth those sublime mysteries, and stupendious wonders of grace, whereby God hath demonstrated an incomprehensible kindness to mankind, and our obligation to correspondent gratitude. 1 Pet. 1. 12. Tit. 3. 4.

It representeth manifold arguments and incentives to love God with most intense affection, to confide in him with most firm assurance, to delight in him continually *with joy unspeakable*; which are the noblest, the sweetest, the happiest operations of our soul.

It reareth our hearts from vain thoughts, and mean desires concerning these poor, transitory, earthly things to contemplations, affections, and hopes toward objects most excellent, eternal and celestial. 2 Cor. 4. 8.

It engageth us to study the Book of God, the Book of Books, the richest mine of most excellent knowledge, containing infallible Oracles of truth, and heavenly rules of life; *which are able to make us wise to salvation, and perfect to every good work.* (2 Tim 3 15.) Psal. 19. 10.

And how can we otherwise be so well employed, as in meditation about such things? What Occupation doth nearer approach to that of the blessed Angels? What Heaven is there upon Earth, like to that of constantly feasting our minds and hearts in the contemplation of such objects? Especially considering that this study doth not onely yield private benefit to our selves, in forwarding our own salvation, but enableth us by our guidance and incouragement to promote the eternal welfare of others, and by our endeavours to people Heaven; according to that exhortation of St. *Paul* pressing on *Timothy* this study with diligence; *Meditate upon these things; give thy self wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all; take heed unto thy self, and unto the doctrine, continue in them; for in doing this, thou shalt both save thy self, and them that hear thee.* 1 Tim. 4. 16.

So considerable is each part of learning, so extremely profitable are some parts of it; Indeed the skill of any liberal art is valuable, as a handsome ornament, as a harmless divertisement, as an useful instrument upon occasions; as preferible to all other accomplishments and advantages of person or fortune (beauty, strength, wealth, power, or the like;) for who would not purchase any kind of such knowledge at any rate; who would sell it for any price; who would not chuse rather to be deformed or impotent in his body, than to have a mis-shapen and weak mind; to have rather a lank purse, than an empty brain; to have no title at all, than no worth to bear it out? if any would, he is not of *Solomon*'s mind; for of wisedom (by which he meaneth a comprehension of all knowledge, divine and humane; into which the knowledge of natural things, of Mathematicks, of Poetry, are reckoned ingredients) he saith, *The merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold; she is more pretious than rubies, and all the things thou canst desire, are not to be compared unto her: Her fruit is better than gold, yea than fine gold; and her revenue than choice silver.* 1 Kings 4. 29 — Prov. 2. 14. 8. 11. Prov. 8 19. 16. 16 20. 15. 4. 7.

Now

Now then, conſidering all theſe advantages of our calling, if we by our negligence or ſluggiſhneſs therein do loſe them, are we not very ingrateful to God, who gave them, as with a gratious intent for our good, ſo with expectation that we ſhould improve them to his ſervice? If God had allotted to us the calling of Ruſticks, or of Artificers, we had been impious in not diligently following it; but we are abominably ingrateful in neglecting this moſt incomparably excellent vocation.

Are we not extremely defective to our ſelves, if indulging a wretched humour of lazineſs we will not enjoy thoſe ſweet pleaſures, nor embrace thoſe great profits to which God in mercy calleth us?

Prov. 19. 8. If *Solomon* ſaid true, *He that getteth wiſedom, loveth his own ſoul, he that keepeth underſtanding ſhall find good*; how little friends are we to our ſelves, how neglectful of our own welfare, by not uſing the means of getting wiſedom?

Prov. 15. 14. *The heart of him that hath underſtanding, ſeeketh knowledge*, ſaith *Solomon*; what a fool then is he that ſhunneth it? who, though it be his way, and his ſpecial duty to ſeek it, yet neglecteth it; chuſing rather to do nothing, or to do worſe.

And do we not deſerve great blame, diſpleaſure and diſgrace from mankind, if having ſuch opportunities of qualifying our ſelves to do good, and ſerve the publick, we by our idleneſs render our ſelves worthleſs and uſeleſs?

How, being ſlothful in our buſineſs, can we anſwer for our violating the wills, for abuſing the goodneſs, for perverting the charity and bounty of our worthy Founders and Benefactours, who gave us the good things we enjoy, not to maintain us in idleneſs, but for ſupports and encouragements of our induſtry? how can we excuſe our ſelves from diſhoneſty, and perfidious dealing, ſeeing that we are admitted to theſe enjoyments under condition, and upon confidence (confirmed by our free promiſes, and moſt ſolemn engagements) of uſing them according to their pious intent, that is in a diligent proſecution of our ſtudies, in order to the ſervice of God, and of the publick?

Let every Scholar, when he miſpendeth an hour, or ſluggeth on his bed but imagine, that he heareth the voice of thoſe glorious Kings, or Venerable Prelates, or worthy Gentlemen, complaining thus, and rating him; why, ſluggard, doſt thou againſt my will poſſeſs my eſtate? why doſt thou preſume to occupy the place due to an induſtrious perſon? why doſt thou forget, or deſpiſe thy obligations to my kindneſs? thou art an uſurper, a robber, or a purloiner of my goods, which I never intended for ſuch as thee; I challenge thee of wrong to my ſelf, and of ſacrilege toward my God, to whoſe ſervice I devoted thoſe his gifts to me.

How reproachful will it be to us, if that expoſtulation may concern us,

Prov. 17. 16. *Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to get wiſedom, ſeeing he hath no heart to it?*

If to be a dunce, or a bungler, in any profeſſion be ſhameful, how much more ignominious, and infamous to a Scholar to be ſuch? from whom all men expect, that he ſhould excel in intellectual abilities; and be able to help others by his inſtruction and advice.

Nothing ſurely would more grate on the heart of one, that hath a ſpark of ingenuity, of modeſty, of generous good nature, than to be liable to ſuch an imputation.

To avoid it therefore (together with all the guilt, and all the miſchiefs attending on ſloth) let each of us in God's name, carefully mind his buſineſs; And let the grace and bleſſing of God proſper you therein. *Amen.*

SERM-

SERMON XXIII.

The Unsearchableness of God's Judgments.

ROM. XI. 33.

How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his ways past finding out?

THESE words are the close of a disputation, wherein St. *Paul* was engaged with the advocates of *Judaism*, concerning God's providence toward his ancient people, in rejecting the greatest part of them upon their refusal to embrace the *Christian* Doctrine; and in admitting the *Gentile* World to favour, upon its compliance with the overtures of it propounded in the *Gospel*. In this proceeding those *Infidels* could not discern God's hand, nor would allow such a dispensation worthy of him, objecting several exceptions against it: God (said they) having espoused and confederated us to himself; having to our Fathers, in regard to their faith, made absolute promises of benediction on their posterity; having consequently endowed us with great privileges and choice pledges of favour; having taken so much pains with us, and performed so great things in our behalf; having so long avowed, supported, and cherished us; how can it well consist with his wisdom, with his justice, with his fidelity, with his constancy, thus instantly to abandon and repudiate us? doth not this dealing argue his former affections to have been misplaced; doth it not implead his ancient covenant and law of imperfection; doth it not frustrate his own designs, and unravel all that he for so many ages hath been doing? Upon such accompts did this dispensation appear very strange and scandalous to them: but St. *Paul* being infallibly assured of its truth, doth undertake to vindicate it from all misprisions, rendring a fair account of it, and assigning for it many satisfactory reasons, drawn from the general equity of the case, from the nature of God, his attributes, and his relations to men; from the congruity of this proceeding to the tenour of God's providence, to his most ancient purposes, to the true intent of his promises, to his express declarations and predictions; to the state of things in the World, and the pressing needs of all mankind; such reasons (I mean, which I have not time more explicitly to relate) doth the *Apostle* produce in favour of this great dispensation; the which did suffice to clear and justifie it from all their objections; yet notwithstanding after that he had steered his discourse through all these rocks, he thought it time to cast anchor; winding up the contest in this modest intimation, that whatever he could say, might not perhaps exhaust the difficulty, or avoid all scruple; that therefore in this and in all such cases, for entire satisfaction

Now then, conſidering all theſe advantages of our calling, if we by our negligence or ſluggiſhneſs therein do loſe them, are we not very ingrateful to God, who gave them, as with a gratious intent for our good, ſo with expectation that we ſhould improve them to his ſervice? If God had allotted to us the calling of Ruſticks, or of Artificers, we had been impious in not diligently following it; but we are abominably ingrateful in neglecting this moſt incomparably excellent vocation.

Are we not extremely defective to our ſelves, if indulging a wretched humour of lazineſs we will not enjoy thoſe ſweet pleaſures, nor embrace thoſe great profits to which God in mercy calleth us?

Prov. 15. 8. If *Solomon* ſaid true, *He that getteth wiſedom, loveth his own ſoul, he that keepeth underſtanding ſhall find good*; how little friends are we to our ſelves, how neglectful of our own welfare, by not uſing the means of getting wiſedom?

Prov. 15. 14. *The heart of him that hath underſtanding, ſeeketh knowledge,* ſaith *Solomon*; what a fool then is he that ſhunneth it? who, though it be his way, and his ſpecial duty to ſeek it, yet neglecteth it; chuſing rather to do nothing, or to do worſe.

And do we not deſerve great blame, diſpleaſure and diſgrace from mankind, if having ſuch opportunities of qualifying our ſelves to do good, and ſerve the publick, we by our idleneſs render our ſelves worthleſs and uſeleſs?

How, being ſlothful in our buſineſs, can we anſwer for our violating the wills, for abuſing the goodneſs, for perverting the charity and bounty of our worthy Founders and Benefactours, who gave us the good things we enjoy, not to maintain us in idleneſs, but for ſupports and encouragements of our induſtry? how can we excuſe our ſelves from diſhoneſty, and perfidious dealing, ſeeing that we are admitted to theſe enjoyments under condition, and upon confidence (confirmed by our free promiſes, and moſt ſolemn engagements) of uſing them according to their pious intent, that is in a diligent proſecution of our ſtudies, in order to the ſervice of God, and of the publick?

Let every Scholar, when he miſpendeth an hour, or ſluggeth on his bed but imagine, that he heareth the voice of thoſe glorious Kings, or Venerable Prelates, or worthy Gentlemen, complaining thus, and rating him; why, ſluggard, doſt thou againſt my will poſſeſs my eſtate? why doſt thou preſume to occupy the place due to an induſtrious perſon? why doſt thou forget, or deſpiſe thy obligations to my kindneſs? thou art an uſurper, a robber, or a purloiner of my goods, which I never intended for ſuch as thee; I challenge thee of wrong to my ſelf, and of ſacrilege toward my God, to whoſe ſervice I devoted thoſe his gifts to me.

How reproachful will it be to us, if that expoſtulation may concern us,

Prov. 17. 16. *Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to get wiſedom, ſeeing he hath no heart to it?*

If to be a dunce, or a bungler, in any profeſſion be ſhameful, how much more ignominious, and infamous to a Scholar to be ſuch? from whom all men expect, that he ſhould excel in intellectual abilities; and be able to help others by his inſtruction and advice.

Nothing ſurely would more grate on the heart of one, that hath a ſpark of ingenuity, of modeſty, of generous good nature, than to be liable to ſuch an imputation.

To avoid it therefore (together with all the guilt, and all the miſchiefs attending on ſloth) let each of us in God's name, carefully mind his buſineſs; And let the grace and bleſſing of God proſper you therein. *Amen.*

SERM-

SERMON XXIII.

The Unſearchableneſs of God's Judgments.

ROM. XI. 33.

How unſearchable are his Judgments, and his ways paſt finding out?

THESE words are the cloſe of a diſputation, wherein St. *Paul* was engaged with the advocates of *Judaiſm*, concerning God's providence toward his ancient people, in rejecting the greateſt part of them, upon their refuſal to embrace the *Chriſtian* Doctrine; and in admitting the *Gentile* World to favour, upon its compliance with the overtures thereof, propoſed in the *Goſpel*. In this proceeding thoſe *Infidels* could not diſcern God's hand, nor would allow ſuch a diſpenſation worthy of him, advancing ſeveral exceptions againſt it: God (ſaid they) having eſpouſed and conſecrated us to himſelf; having to our Fathers, in regard to their piety, made ſo abſolute promiſes of benediction on their poſterity; having conſequently endowed us with ſuch privileges and choice pledges of his favour; having taken ſo much pains with us, and performed ſo great things in our behalf; having ſo long avowed, ſupported, and cheriſhed us; how can it well conſiſt with his wiſedom, with his juſtice, with his fidelity, with his conſtancy thus inſtantly to abandon and repudiate us? doth not this dealing argue his former affections to have been miſplaced; doth it not implead his ancient covenant and law of imperfection; doth it not ſupplant his own deſigns, and unravel all that he for ſo many ages hath been doing? Upon ſuch accompts did this diſpenſation appear very ſtrange and ſcandalous to them: but St. *Paul*, being infallibly aſſured of its truth, doth undertake to vindicate it from all miſpriſions, rendring a fair accompt of it, and aſſigning for it many ſatisfactory reaſons, drawn from the general equity of the caſe, from the nature of God, his attributes, and his relations to men; from the congruity of this proceeding to the tenour of God's providence, to his moſt ancient purpoſes, to the true intent of his promiſes, to his expreſs declarations and predictions; to the ſtate of things in the World, and the preſſing needs of all mankind: ſuch reaſons (I ſay, which I have not time more explicitly to relate) doth the *Apoſtle* produce in favour of this great diſpenſation; the which did ſuffice to clear and juſtifie it from all their objections; yet notwithſtanding after that he had ſteered his diſcourſe through all theſe rocks, he thought it ſafe to caſt anchor; winding up the conteſt in this modeſt intimation, that whatever he could ſay, might not perhaps exhauſt the difficulty, or void all ſcruple; that therefore in this and in all ſuch caſes, for entire ſa-

tisfaction we should have recourse to the incomprehensible wisedom of God, who frequently in the course of his providence doth act upon grounds, and ordereth things in methods transcending our ability to discover or trace: to consider some causes and reasons of which incomprehensiblity, and to ground thereon some practical advices will be the scope of my discourse: The reasons may be these.

1. As the dealings of very wise men sometimes are founded upon maxims, and admit justifications not obvious, nor penetrable by vulgar conceit, so may God act according to rules of wisedom and justice; which it may be quite impossible by our faculties to apprehend, or with our means to descry.

As there are natural modes of being and operation (such as God's necessary subsistence, his production of things from nothing, his eternity without succession, his immensity without extension, his prescience without necessitation of events, his ever acting, but never changing; and the like) so there may be prudential and moral rules of proceeding far above our reach; so God himself telleth us: *As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.* Some of them we may be uncapable to know, because of our finite nature; they being peculiar objects of divine wisedom, and not to be understood by any creature: for as God cannot impart the power of doing all things possible, so may he not communicate the faculty of knowing all things intelligible; that being indeed to ungod himself, or to deprive himself of his peerless supremacy in wisedom; hence is he styled *the onely wise God*; hence is he said to *dwell in light inaccessible*; hence he *chargeth the Angels with folly*; hence the most illuminate Seraphims do veil their faces before him.

Isa. 55. 8.

1 Tim. 1. 17. Rom. 16. 27. Jude 25. 1 Tim. 6. 16. Job 4. 18. Isa. 6. 2.

Other such rules we may not be able to perceive from the meanness of our nature, or our low rank among creatures; for beneath omniscience there being innumerable forms of intelligence, in the lowest of these we sit, one remove from beasts; being endowed with capacities, sutable to that inferiour station, and to those meaner employments, for which we were designed, and framed; whence our mind hath a pitch, beyond which it cannot soar; and things clearly intelligible to more noble creatures, moving in a higher orbe, may be dark and unexplicable to us: *as an Angel of God, so is my Lord the King, to discern good and bad*, was an expression importing this difference, how those glorious creatures do oretop us in intellectual capacities.

Psal. 103. 20. 2 Pet. 2. 11.

2 Sam. 14. 17, 20. 19. 27.

Also divers notions, not simply passing our capacity to know, we are not yet in condition to ken, by reason of our circumstances here, in this dark corner of things, to which we are confined, and wherein we lie under many disadvantages of attaining knowledge: He that is shut up in a close place, and can onely peep through chinks, who standeth in a valley, and hath his prospect intercepted, who is incompassed with foggs, who hath but a dusky light to view things by, whose eyes are weak or foul, how can he see much or far, how can he discern things remote, minute, or subtile, clearly and distinctly? such is our case; our mind is pent up in the body, and looketh onely through those clefts, by which objects strike our sense; its intuition is limited within a very small compass; it resteth in an atmosphere of fancy, stuffit with exhalations from temper, appetite, passion, interest; its light is scant and faint (for sense and experience do reach onely some few gross matters of fact, light infused, and revelation imparted to us, proceed from arbitrary dispensation, in definite measures)

meaſures) our ratiocination conſequently from ſuch principles muſt be very ſhort and defective; nor are our minds ever thoroughly ſound, or pure and defecate from prejudices; hence no wonder, that now we are wholly ignorant of divers great truths, or have but a glimmering notion of them, which we may, and hereafter ſhall come fully and clearly to underſtand: ſo that even *Apoſtles*, the Secretaries of Heaven, might ſay, *We know in part, and we propheſie in part; We now ſee through a glaſs darkly, but then face to face.* 1 Cor. 13. 9, 12.

In fine, thoſe rules of equity or experience, which we in our tranſactions with one another do uſe (being derived from our original inclinations to like ſome good things, or from notions ſtamped on our ſoul, when God made us according to his image, from common experience, from any kind of rational collection, from the preſcription of God's word) if they be applied to the dealings of God, will be found very incongruous, or deficient; the caſe being vaſtly altered from that infinite diſtance in nature and ſtate between God and us; and from the immenſe differences which his relations toward us have from our relations to one another.

Wherefore in divers enquiries about providence, to which our curioſity will ſtretch it ſelf, it is impoſſible for us to be reſolved, and launching into them we ſhall ſoon get out of our depth, ſo as to ſwim in diſſatisfaction, or to ſink into diſtruſt: why God made the World at ſuch an inſtant, no ſooner or later; why he made it thus, not exempt from all diſorder; why he framed man (the Prince of viſible creatures) ſo fallible and frail, ſo prone to ſin, ſo liable to miſery; why ſo many things happen, offenſive to him; why his gifts are diſtributed with ſuch inequality; ſuch queſtions we are apt to propound and to debate; but the reſolution of them our mind perhaps was not made to apprehend, nor in its moſt elevate condition ſhall attain it; however in this ſtate we by no means can come at it; it at leaſt being kept cloſe from us among thoſe things, of which it is ſaid, *The ſecret things belong unto the Lord our God*, in diſtinction from others, Deut. 29. 30. about which it is added, *But thoſe that are revealed belong unto us, and to our children for ever.*

In ſuch caſes the abſolute will, the ſovereign authority, the pure liberality of God do ſupply the place of reaſons, ſufficient, if not to ſatisfie the minds of men fondly curious, yet to ſtop the mouths of thoſe, who are boldly peremptory: the which are alledged, not with intent to imply that God ever acteth unaccomptably, or without higheſt reaſon, but that ſometimes his methods of acting are not fit ſubjects of our conception or diſcuſſion; for otherwhile God appealeth to the verdict of our reaſon; when the caſe is ſuch that we can apprehend it, and the apprehenſion of it may conduce to good purpoſes. Rom. 9. 20. Iſa. 45. 9. Gen. 18. 25. Ezek. 18. 25. Iſa. 5. 3.

2. As the ſtanding rules of God's acting, ſo the occaſional grounds thereof are commonly placed beyond the ſphere of our apprehenſion.

God is obliged to proſecute his own immutable decrees; *working all things* (as the *Apoſtle* ſaith) *according to the counſel of his own will*; which how can we any-wiſe come to diſcover? can we climb up above the Heaven of Heavens, and there unlock his Cloſet, rifle his Cabinet, and peruſe the Records of everlaſting deſtiny, by which the World is governed? No; *Who knoweth his mind, or hath been his counſellor? Who* (ſaith the *Prophet*) *hath ſtood in the counſel of the Lord; or hath perceived and heard his word?* Eph. 1. 11. Rom. 11. 34. Iſa. 40. 13. Jer. 23. 18. Sap. 9. 13.

He doth *search the hearts, and try the reins of men*; he doth * *weigh their spirits*, and *their works*; he doth *know their frame*, he doth *understand their thoughts afar off*; he perceiveth their closest intentions, their deepest contrivances, their most retired behaviours; he consequently is acquainted with their true qualifications, capacities and merits; unto which he most justly and wisely doth accommodate his dealings with them; the which therefore must often thwart the opinions and expectations of us, who are ignorant of those particulars, and can onely view the exteriour face or semblance of things: for (as *Samuel*, in the case of preferring *David* before his brethren, did say) *God seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh at the outward appearance, but God looketh on the heart.*

* Prov. 16. 2. Isa. 26. 7. 1 Sam. 2. 3. Psal. 103. 14. 139. 2. 64. 6. Job 14. 16.

Ἡμεῖς μὲν γὰρ μόνα ὁρῶμεν τὰ σχήματα· ὁ δὲ θεὸς, καὶ τὰ ταῦτα δρᾶντων ἐξῆσθαι † σκοπὸν, καὶ τούτῳ μᾶλλον, ἢ τοῖς ἔργοις δικάζων ἐπιφέρει τιὼ χεῖρα. Theod. Ep. 3.

1 Sam. 16. 7.

God also hath a perfect foresight of contingent events; he seeth upon what pin each wheel moveth, and with what weight every scale will be turned; he discerneth all the connexions, all the entanglements of things, and what the result will be upon the combination, or the clashing of numberless causes; in correspondence to which perceptions he doth order things consistently, and conveniently; whereas we being stark blind, or very dim-sighted in such respects (seeing nothing future, and but few things present) cannot apprehend what is fit and feasible; or why that is done, which appeareth done to us.

Isa. 45. 11.

God observeth in what relations, and what degrees of comparison (as to their natures, their vertues, their consequences) all things do stand, each toward others; so poising them in the balance of right judgment, as exactly to distinguish their just weight and worth; whereas we cannot tell what things to compare, we know not how to put them into the scale, we are unapt to make due allowances, we are unable to discern which side doth overweigh: In the immense variety of objects, our knowledge doth extend to few things eligible, nor among them can we pick out the best competitors for our choice: Hence often must we be at great losses in scanning the designs, or tracing the footsteps of providence.

3. We are also uncapable thoroughly to discern the ways of providence from our moral defects, in some measure common to all men; from our stupidity, our sloth, our temerity, our impatience, our impurity of heart, our perverseness of will and affections: we have not the perspicacity to espy the subtile tracts, and secret reserves of divine wisedom; we have not the industry, with steady application of mind, to regard and meditate on God's works; we have not the temper and patience to wait upon God, untill he discover himself in the accomplishment of his purposes; we have not that *blessed purity of heart*, which is requisite to the *seeing God* in his special dispensations; we have not that rectitude of will, and government of our passions, as not to be scandalized at what God doeth, if it thwarteth our conceit or humour: such defects are observable in the best men; who therefore have misapprehended, have disrelished, have fretted and murmured at the proceedings of God; we might instance in *Job*, in *David*, in *Elias*, in *Jonah*, in the holy *Apostles* themselves; by whose speeches and deportments in some cases it may appear, how difficult it is for us, who have *eyes of flesh* (as *Job* speaketh) and hearts too never quite freed of carnality, to see through, or fully to acquiesce in the dealings of God.

Matth. 5. 8.

Job 10. 3.

It is indeed a distemper incident to us, which we can hardly shun, or cure, that we are apt to measure the equity and expedience of things according

cording to our opinions and paſſions; affecting conſequently to impoſe on God our ſilly imaginations as rules of his proceeding, and to conſtitute him the Executioner of our ſorry paſſions; what we conceit fit to be done, that we take God bound to perform; when we feel our ſelves ſtirred, then we preſume God muſt be a-like concerned: to our apprehenſions, every ſlight inconvenience is a huge calamity, every ſcratch of fortune is a ghaſtly wound; God therefore, we think, ſhould have prevented it, or muſt preſently remove it; every pitifull bauble, every trivial accommodation is a matter of high conſequence, which if God withhold, we are ready to clamour on him; and wail as children for want of a trifle. Are we ſoundly angry, or enflamed with zeal? then *fire muſt come down from heaven*, Luke 9. 55. then thunderbolts muſt fly about, then nothing but ſudden woe and vengeance are denounced; are we pleaſed? then ſhowres of bleſſings muſt deſcend on the heads, then flouds of wealth muſt run into the laps of our favourites; otherwiſe we are not ſatisfied; and ſcarce can deem God awake, or mindfull of his charge. We do beyond meaſure hate or deſpiſe ſome perſons, and to thoſe God muſt not afford any favour, any mercy, any forbearance, or time of repentance; we exceſſively admire or dote on others, and thoſe God muſt not touch or croſs; if he doth not proceed thus, he is in danger to forfeit his authority: he muſt hardly be allowed to govern the World, in caſe he will not ſquare his adminiſtrations to our fond conceit, or froward humour: Hence no wonder, that men often are ſtumbled about providence; for God will not rule according to their fancy or pleaſure, (it would be a mad World if he ſhould) neither indeed could he doe ſo, if he would, their judgments and their deſires being infinitely various, inconſiſtent and repugnant. Again,

4. The nature of thoſe inſtruments, which divine providence doth uſe in adminiſtration of humane affairs, hindereth us from diſcerning it: it is an obſervation among *Philoſophers*, that the footſteps of divine wiſedom are, to excluſion of doubt, far more conſpicuous in the works of nature, than in the management of our affairs; ſo that ſome, who by contemplation of natural appearances were convinced of God's exiſtence, and his protection of the World, (who thence could not doubt, but that an immenſe wiſedom had erected the beautifull frame of Heaven and Earth, had ranged the ſtars in their order and courſes; had formed the bodies and ſouls of *Animals*, had provided for the ſubſiſtence and propagation of each *Species*, had ſetled and doth uphold the viſible World in its ſo comely and convenient ſtate, that even ſuch men) reflecting on the courſe of humane tranſactions, have ſtaggered into diſtruſt, whether a divine wiſedom doth ſit at the helm of our affairs; many thence hardly would admit God to be concerned in them, but ſuppoſed him to commit their conduct to a fatal ſwinge, or a caſual fluctuation of obvious cauſes: One great reaſon of this difference may be, that whereas the inſtruments of divine power in nature are in themſelves merely paſſive, or act onely as they are acted by pure neceſſity (as a Pen in writing, or a Hammer in ſtriking) being thence determinate, uniform, conſtant, and certain in their operation; whenever there any footſteps of counſel, any tendency to an end, and deviation from the common tracks of motion do appear, ſuch effects cannot reaſonably be imputed merely to natural cauſes, but to a ſuperiour wiſedom, wielding them in ſuch a manner, and ſteering them to ſuch a mark: but the viſible engines

Nam cum diſpoſiti quæſiſſem fœdera mundi,
Præſcriptoſque mari fines——
——tunc omnia rebar
Conſilio firmata Dei——
Sed cum res hominum tanta caligine volvi
Adſpicerem——
——rurſus labefacta cadebat
Religio, &c.
Claud. *in* Ruff. 1.
Diod. Cic. *lib.* 15. *p.* 482.

gines of providence in our affairs are self-moving agents, working with knowledge and choice; the which, as in themselves they are indeterminate, irregular and uncertain, so they are capable to be diversified in numberless unaccountable ways, according to various representations of objects, or by influence of divers principles inclining to judge and chuse differently: temper, humour, passion, prejudice, custome, example, together with contingencies of occasion (depending on like principles in adjacent free causes) do move, singly or combinedly, in ways so implicate, to the production of so various events, that nothing hardly can fall out, which may not with some plausible colour of reason be derived from some one of those sources, or from a complication of them: nothing can appear so uncouth or extravagant, which may not be fathered on some fetch of wit, or some hit of fancy, or some capricio of humour, or some transport of passion, or some lucky advantage, or on divers of those conspiring; whence in accompting for the reason of such events, men deem they may leave out providence, as superfluous; especially considering, that usually disorders and defects, onely imputable to man's will, do accompany and further such events.

Gen. 45. 5. 50. 20. Psal. 105. 17. 2 Sam. 16. 10. 2 Sam. 24. 1. 1 King. 12. 15, 24. Job 1. 15, &c. Act. 2. 23. 4. 28.

For instance, what other cause would many think needfull to assign for the conveyance of *Joseph* into *Egypt*, than the envy of his Brethren; for *Shimei*'s reviling *David*, than his base malignity; for *David*'s numbring the people, than his wanton pride; for *Jeroboam*'s revolt, than his unruly ambition; for *Job*'s being robb'd, than the theevish disposition of the *Arabs*; for his being diseased, than a redundance of bad humours; for our *Lord*'s suffering, than the spitefull rage of the *Jewish* Rulers and People; together with the treacherous avarice of *Judas*, and the corrupt easiness of *Pilate*? these events, all of them, are ascribed to God's hand, and special ordination; but men could not see, or avow it in them; what need will men ever say in such cases to introduce God's aid, when humane means suffice to atchieve the feat?

5. Indeed, as in nature, the influences of Heaven, and of inferiour causes, so commonly in the production of these events, divine and humane agency are so knit and twisted one with the other, that it is not easie to discriminate them, so as to sever the bounds of common and special providence; or to discern what God performeth by natural instruments, what by superiour efficacy; when the balance turneth from our inclinations, when it is cast from a grain thrown in by divine interposition: the management of these affairs being a consort, wherein God's wisedom beareth one part, man's free-will playeth another; fortune and occasion also do strike in, we not seeing the first, are prone to ascribe all the harmony to the last, which are most obvious and visible.

Θεὸς μὲν πάντα, καὶ μετὰ Θεὸν τύχη καὶ καιρὸς τὰ ἀνθρώπινα κυβερνῶσι ξύμπαντα. Max. Tyr. *diss.* 3. ὁ Plat.

6. The more apt we are to do thus, because the manner of divine efficacy is ever very soft and gentle: God disposeth things *fortiter & suaviter*; so as effectually to perform what he designeth, but in the most sweet and easie way: his providence doth not hurry along like an impetuous rumbling torrent, but glideth on as a smooth and still current, with an irresistible, but imperceptible force carrying things down therewith: without much adoe, without any clatter, by a nod of his head, by a whisper of his mouth, by a turn of his hand, he doth effect his purposes: winding up a close spring, he setteth the greatest wheels in motion, and thrusting in an insensible spoak he stoppeth the greatest wheels in their carriere; injecting a thought, exciting an humour, presenting an occasion, insinu-

Sap. 8. 1. εὐτέλως καὶ χρηστῶς.

Θεῖ πνοὴ ἐμβάλλουσα εἰς τὸν ἄνθρωπον. Plut. Timol.

insinuating a petty accident he bringeth about the most notable events. He doth so *fashion the hearts of men*, so *manage their hands*, so *guide their steps*, that even they who are acted by him cannot feel the least touch upon them. For, *The King's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of waters he turneth it whereſoever he will*; that is, by ſecret pipes, by obſcure chanels God conveyeth the minds and wills of greateſt perſons (the chief engines of his providence) unto ſuch points of reſolution as he pleaſeth, ſo that they ſeem to flow thither of their own accord without any exteriour direction or impulſe: hence do his moſt effectual operations ſlip by us without making impreſſion on our minds, which are wont to apprehend things, as with a groſs palpability they do incur the ſenſes, ſo that the *Preacher*, comparing the methods of providence with the moſt occult proceedings in nature, might well ſay, *As thou knoweſt not the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child, ſo thou knoweſt not the works of God, who maketh all.* Again,

Pſal. 33. 15. Iſa. 41. 13. 42. 6. Prov. 16. 9. 20. 24. Jer. 10. 23. Job 33. 14. 23. 8.

Prov. 21. 1.

Eccl. 11. 5.

7. God in his progreſs toward the atchievement of any deſign, is not wont to go in the moſt direct and compendious ways, but commonly windeth about, and maketh a large compaſs, enfolding ſeveral other co-incident purpoſes, ſome whereof may be no leſs conſiderable, than is that, which we deem moſt neceſſary, and affect to ſee diſpatched; but this courſe ſeemeth tedious to us, who have not the wit to perceive that complexion of ends, nor the temper to wait for the completion of them. If God, when we ſeem to need, doth not inſtantly appear in our favour and ſuccour; if he doth not preſently vindicate truth and right; if he doth not nip wicked deſigns in the bud, and repreſs the firſt onſets of outragious violence; if for a while he ſuffereth *the tabernacles of robbers to proſper*, and *iniquity to lift up its horn*; then he is in a ſlumber, quite unmindfull or inſenſible of us; then he turneth aſide his face, or doth behold what paſſeth as an unconcerned ſpectatour; then he ſtandeth aloof, unready to help us; then doth he hold off his hand, not meddling in our affairs; in ſuch caſes we are apt to cry out; *Eſtu ubi ſuperi: How long, O Lord, wilt thou forget? how long wilt thou hide thy face? Lord, how long wilt thou look on? Awake, why ſleepeſt thou, O Lord? why ſtandeſt thou far off? why withdraweſt thou thy hand? pluck it out of thy boſome: Return, O Lord, how long?* ſuch are our prayers, ſuch our expoſtulations; ſo is our blind impatience prone to muſe and mutter; not conſidering, how many good deſigns God is carrying on in a calm and ſteady pace, by well meaſured ſteps, all which in due ſeaſon, when they are ripe for accompliſhment, ſhall undoubtedly be effected; for, *The Lord*, as St. *Peter* ſaith, *is not ſlack concerning his promiſe, as ſome men count ſlackneſs, but is long-ſuffering toward all men*, that is, he certainly will expreſs his faithfull benignity toward good men, yet ſo as alſo to extend his merciful patience toward others; he ſo will tender the intereſts of ſome, as concurrently to procure the welfare of all, and accordingly will time his proceedings, allowing the leiſure and opportunities requiſite thereto: He can, although we cannot, *wait to be gracious*; as in him there are no paſſions to precipitate action, ſo to him there are no ſenſible differences of time, *One day being with the Lord as a thouſand years, and a thouſand years as one day.*

Sil. Ital. Pſal. 13. 1. 89. 46. 90. 13. 74. 10. 44. 24. 83. 1. 94. 3. 35. 17. Pſal. 35. 17. Pſal. 44. 23. 35. 23. 7. 6. Pſal. 74. 11. Pſal. 10. 1. Pſal. 98. 13. 6. 4. 7. 7. 80. 14. Pſal. 22. 1, 11, 19. 38. 2. 71. 12. *Vid.* Hab. 1. 2——

(Jer. 23. 20.) 2 Pet. 3. 9, 10.

Iſa. 30. 18.

8. Again, God (as is the property of every wiſe Agent) is wont to act variouſly, according to the ſtate and circumſtances of things, or to the

the dispositions and capacities of persons; so as to doe the same thing for different ends, and different things for the same end; to apply one instrument to several uses, and by several instruments to work out one purpose: so he afflicteth good men out of love for trial and improvement of their vertues, bad men in displeasure to illustrate his power and justice on them; he encourageth and blesseth the one, he punisheth and curseth the other with prosperity; he reclaimeth both from errour and sin by either of those methods, as their temper and their circumstances do require: whence it is very difficult for us ever from the kind of accidents befalling men to divine how far God is concerned in them, or to what particular scope they are aimed; so that well might the *Preacher*, upon a careful observation of such occurrences, establish this rule, *No man knoweth love, or hatred* (that is, the special regard of God toward men) *by all that is before them*; because, *All things come alike to all, there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked.* Farther,

Eccl. 9. 1, 2.

9. There are different ends, which providence in various order and measure doth pursue, which we by reason of our dim insight and short prospect cannot descry: God, as the Universal and perpetual Governour of the World, in his dispensation of things respecteth not onely the good of this or that person, of one nation, or one age; but often (in some degree waving that, or taking care for it in a less remarkable way) hath a provident regard to the more extensive good of a whole people, of the World, of posterity; as he did order his friend *Abraham* to wander in a strange Land, for the benefit of his seed; *Joseph* to be sold, calumniated, and fettered for the preservation of his family; Our Lord to suffer those grievous things for the redemption of mankind; the *Jews* to be rejected for the salvation of the *Gentiles*: In such cases purblind men observing events to cross particular and present ends, but not being aware how conducible they may prove to general, remote, and more important designs, can hardly be satisfied how God should be concerned in them; the present, or that which lieth adjacent just under our nose, is all that we can or will consider, and therefore must be ill judges of what is done by all provident wisedom.

Hab. 3. 6.

10. Again, God permitteth things, bad in their own nature, with regard to their instrumental use and tendency; for that often the worst things may be ordinable to the best ends; things very bitter may work pleasant effects; upon the wildest stock divine husbandry can engraft most excellent fruit: sin really, and suffering reputedly are the worst evils, yet from them much glory to God, and great benefit to men do accrue; even from the most wicked act that ever was committed, from the most lamentable event that ever did happen, fruits admirably glorious, and immensly beneficial did spring; yet usually so blind are we as to be offended at such things, and from them to raise exceptions against providence.

11. Also the expediency of things to be permitted or crossed doth frequently consist not in themselves singly taken, as particular acts or events, but in their conjunction or reference to others, with which they may become subservient toward a common end; so that divers things in themselves extremely bad may by combination or collision engender good effects; and thence prove fit weapons or tools of providence; as the most deadly poisons may be so mixed, that curbing one anothers force they may constitute a harmless mass, sometimes a wholsome medicine; but poring on the simple ingredients, and not considering how they may be tempered, or how applied by a skilfull hand, can hardly deem the toleration of them congruous to wisedom. Farther,

12. That

12. That providence sometimes is obscure and intricate, may be attributed to the will of God, upon divers good accompts designing it to be such: *Verily* (saith the *Prophet*) *thou art a God, that hidest thy self, O God of Israel the Saviour.* Is. 45. 15. Psal. 89. 46.

God commonly doth not intend to exert his hand notoriously; for that whereas every special interposition of his hand is in effect a miracle (surmounting the natural power, or thwarting the ordinary course of inferiour causes) it doth not become him to prostitute his miraculous power, or to exert it otherwise than upon singular occasions, and for most weighty causes: 'tis not conformable to the tenour of his administrations to convince men against their will, or by irresistible evidence to wring persuasion from stubborn or stupid minds; but to exercise the wisedom and to prove the ingenuity of well-disposed persons, who upon competent intimations, shall be capable to spell out, and forward to approve his proceedings.

13. He will not glare forth in discoveries so bright as to dazle, to confound our weak sight; therefore he veileth his face with a cloud, and wrappeth his power in some obscurity; therefore *clouds and darkness are round about him; he maketh darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him is dark waters and thick clouds of the sky.* Hab. 3. 4. Psal. 97. 2. 18. 11.

14. He meaneth thereby to improve and exalt our faith, being the less seen, that he may be the more believed; faith never rising higher, than when it doth soar to objects beyond our sight; when we can approve God's wisdom and justice in occurrences surmounting our conceit; when we can rely upon God's word and help, although the stream of his proceedings seemeth to cross our hopes.

15. It is fit also, that God many times designedly should act in ways surpassing our apprehension, and apt to baffle and puzzle our reason, that he may appear God indeed, infinitely transcending us in perfection of wisedom and justice; or that we comprehending the reason of his actings may not imagine our wisedom comparable, our justice commensurate to his; yea that we in those respects do exceed him; for, *That* (as *Tertullian* discourseth) *which may be seen, is less than the eyes that survey it; that which may be comprehended, is less than the hands that grasp it; that which may be valued is less than the senses which rate it;* it is God's being inestimable, that makes him worthily esteemed; his being incomprehensible rendreth him adorable.

Quod videri communiter, quod comprehendi, quod æstimari potest, minus est oculis quibus occupatur, & manibus quibus contaminatur, & sensibus quibus invenitur. Tert. *Apol.* 17.

Hoc est quod Deum æstimari facit, dum æstimari non capit. Tert. 16.

16. The obscurity of providence doth indeed conciliate an awfull reverence toward it; for darkness naturally raiseth a dread of invisible powers; we use to go on tremblingly, when we cannot see far about us; we regard none so much as those, whose wisedom we find to overreach ours, and whose intentions we cannot sound; it was *Elihu*'s observation, *With God is terrible Majesty, the Almighty we cannot find him out; ---- men do therefore fear him.* Job 37. 22, 23, 24.

17. It is also requisite, that God should dispose many occurrences, cross to our vulgar notions and offensive to our carnal sense, that we may thence be prompted to think of God, driven to seek him, engaged to mark him interposing in our affairs: Men from disorderly and surprizing accidents preposterously do conceive doubts about providence, as if it managing things, nothing odd, or amiss, would occur; whereas if no such events did start up, they might be proner to question it, they would at least come to for-

get or neglect it; for if humane tranſactions paſſed on as do the motions of nature in a ſmooth courſe, without any rub or diſturbance, men commonly would no more think of God, than they do, when they behold the Sun riſing, the Rivers running, the Sea flowing; they would not depend on his protection, or have recourſe to him for ſuccour; it is difficulty and diſtreſs ſeiſing on them, which compell men to implore God for relief, which diſpoſe them to ſee his hand reaching it forth unto them; according to that in the *Pſalm*; *When he ſlew them, then they ſought him, they returned and enquired early after God; they remembred that God was their rock, and the moſt high God their redeemer.* Again,

Pſal. 78. 34.

18. It is needfull that the preſent courſe of providence ſhould not be tranſparently clear and ſatisfactory, that we may be well aſſured concerning a future accompt, and forced in our thoughts to recur thither for a reſolution of all ſuch emergent doubts and difficulties; for if all accompts were apparently ſtated and diſcharged here; if now right did ever prevail, and iniquity were ſuppreſſed; if vertue were duly crowned, and vice deſervedly ſcourged, who would hope or fear an after-reckoning.

This indeed is the grand cauſe, why providence now doth appear ſo cloudy, that men conſider not how our affairs have no complete determination, or final iſſue here: things now are doing and not done; in a progreſs and tendency toward ſomewhat beyond, not in a ſtate of conſiſtence and perfection; this not being the place of deciding cauſes, or diſpenſing rewards; but a ſtate of probation of work, of travel, of combat, of running for the prize, of ſowing toward the harveſt; a ſtate of liberty to follow our own choice, and to lay the ground of our doom; of falling into ſin, and of riſing thence by repentance; of God's exerciſing patience and exhibiting mercy: wherefore as we cannot well judge of an artificial work by its firſt draughts, or of a poem by a few ſcenes, but muſt ſtay till all be finiſhed or acted through; ſo we cannot here clearly diſcern the entire congruity of providential diſpenſations to the divine attributes; the *cataſtrophe* or utmoſt reſolution of things is the general judgment, wherein the deep wiſedom, the exact juſtice, the perfect goodneſs of God will be diſplayed to the full ſatisfaction or conviction of all men; when God's honour will be thoroughly vindicated, his deſpiſed patience, and his abuſed grace will be avenged; every caſe will be rightly tryed, every work will be juſtly recompenced, all accompts will be ſet ſtreight; in the mean time divers things muſt occur unaccomptable to us, looking upon things as they now ſtand abſolutely before us, without reference to that day: conſidering this may induce us to ſuſpend our opinion about ſuch matters, allowing God to go through with his work before we cenſure it, not being ſo quick and precipitate as to foreſtall his judgment; and ſurely would we but obſerve that reaſonable advice of St. *Paul*, *Judge nothing before the time, untill the Lord come*, our chief doubts would be reſolved, our ſhrewdeſt exceptions againſt providence would be voided.

Chryſ. *Tom.* 7. *p.* 15.

Rom. 2. 7.

1 Cor. 4. 5.

Theſe are the chief reaſons of the point, which meditation did ſuggeſt; upon it (for it is not a point merely ſpeculative, but pregnant with uſefull conſequences) divers practical applications may be grounded, which the time ſcarcely will allow me to name.

Eccluſ. 3. 20. Pſal. 131. 1.

1. It ſhould render us modeſt and ſober in our judgment about providential occurrences, not pretending thoroughly to know the reaſons of God's proceedings, or to define the conſequences of them; for it is plainly fond arrogance or profane impoſture to aſſume perfect skill in that, which paſſeth our capacity to learn.

2. It

2. It ſhould make us ſtaunch, and cautious of grounding judgment or cenſure upon preſent events about any cauſe, or any perſon; for it is notorious temerity to paſs ſentence upon grounds uncapable of evidence. Luke 13. 1.

3. It ſhould repreſs wanton curioſity, which may tranſport us beyond our bounds in ſpeculation of theſe myſterious intrigues; ſo that we ſhall loſe our labour and time, ſhall diſcompoſe our minds, ſhall plunge our ſelves into vain errours, or anxious doubts. Job 11. 12. Sap. 9. 13. Job 42. 3.

4. It ſhould keep us from conceitedneſs and confidence in our own wiſedom; for how can we conceit highly of that, or much confide in it, which we find ſo unable to penetrate the reaſon of moſt common and obvious appearances; ſo *non-pluſt* in its enquiries, ſo defeated in its expectations, ſo miſtaken in its judgments of things? Job 40. 4. 42. 2. Pſal. 73. 22. 39. 9.

5. It ſhould preſerve us from infidelity, and from deſpair upon accompt of any croſs accidents occurring here; for 'tis unreaſonable to disbelieve a notion, otherwiſe well grounded, becauſe we cannot aſſoile ſcruples or cavils drawn from matters inſcrutable to us; 'tis fooliſh to deſpair of a good event, upon appearances, whereof we cannot apprehend the full reaſon, or final reſult.

6. It ſhould prevent our taking offence, or being diſcontented at any events riſing up before us; for to be diſpleaſed at that, which a ſuperiour wiſedom, unſearchable to us, doth order, is to be diſpleaſed at we know not what, or why, which is childiſh weakneſs; to fret and wail at that, which for all we can ſee, proceedeth from good intention, and tendeth to good iſſue, is pitifull frowardneſs. 2 Kings 20. 9. Matt. 16. 23.

7. It ſhould guard us from ſecurity, or from preſuming upon impunity for our miſcarriages; for ſeeing God doth not always clearly and fully diſcover his mind, it is vain from God's reſervedneſs to conclude his unconcernedneſs; or becauſe he is now patient, that he never will be juſt in chaſtiſing our offences. Eccles. 8. 11.

8. It ſhould quicken our induſtry in obſerving and conſidering the works of providence; for ſince they are not eaſily diſcernible, and the diſcerning them in ſome meaſure is ſometimes of great uſe, it is needfull that we be very diligent in contemplation of them; the fainter our light is, the more attent we ſhould be in looking; the knottier the ſubject, the more earneſt ſhould be our ſtudy on it. Iſaiah 26. 11. 5. 12.

9. It ſhould oblige us to be circumſpect and wary in our converſation; for the darker the way is, the more carefull ſhould be our walking therein, leſt we err, leſt we ſtumble, leſt we ſtrike on ſomewhat hurtfull to us.

10. It ſhould engage us conſtantly to ſeek God, and to depend on him, for the protection and conduct of his grace, which is the onely clew, that can lead us ſafely through this intricate labyrinth of worldly contingencies. Jer. 10. 23.

11. In fine, it ſhould cauſe us humbly to admire and adore that wiſedom, which governeth the World in ways no leſs great and wonderfull, than juſt and holy; for, *Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord God Almighty; juſt and true are thy ways, O thou King of Saints.* Pſal. 36. 6. 92. 5. Apoc. 15. 3. 19. 2.

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, inviſible, the onely wiſe God be honour and glory for ever and ever, Amen.

SERMON XXIV.

Of Obedience to our Spiritual Guides and Governours.

HEB. XIII. 17.

Obey them that have the rule over you.

OBedience unto Spiritual Guides and Governours is a duty of great importance; the which to declare and preſs is very ſeaſonable for theſe times, wherein ſo little regard is had thereto: I have therefore pitched on this Text, being an Apoſtolical precept, briefly and clearly enjoining that duty: and in it we ſhall conſider and explain theſe two particulars: 1. The perſons, to whom obedience is to be payed. 2. What that obedience doth import, or wherein it conſiſteth: and together with explication of the duty, we ſhall apply it, and urge its practice.

I. As to the perſons, unto whom obedience is to be performed, they are generally ſpeaking all Spiritual Guides, or Governours of the Church (thoſe *who ſpeak to us the word of God, and who watch for our ſouls*, as they are deſcribed in the context) expreſſed here by a term very ſignificant and appoſite, as implying fully the nature of their charge, the qualification of their perſons, their rank, and privileges in the Church, together conſequently with the grounds of obligation to the correſpondent duties toward them. There are in Holy Scripture divers names and phraſes appropriate to them, each of them denoting ſome eminent part of their office, or ſome appurtenance thereto; but this ſeemeth of all moſt comprehenſive; ſo that unto it all the reſt are well reducible: the term is ἡγέμενοι, that is, *Leaders*, or *Guides*, or *Captains*; which properly may denote the ſubſequent particulars in way of duty, or privilege appertaining to them.

Heb. 13. 7, 17.

1. It may denote eminence of dignity, or ſuperiority to others: that they are (as it is ſaid of *Judas* and *Silas* in the *Acts*) ἄνδρες ἡγέμενοι ἐν ἀδελφοῖς, *principal men among the brethren:* for to *lead* implieth precedence, which is a note of ſuperiority and preeminence. Hence are they ſtyled προεστῶτες, *Preſidents* or Prelates; οἱ πρῶτοι, *the firſt*, or *prime* men; οἱ μείζονες, *the greater*, Majors, or Grandees among us: *He* (ſaith our *Lord*) *that will be the firſt among you, let him be your ſervant*; and *He that is greater among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth ſerve*; where ὁ μείζων, and ὁ ἡγέμενος (the *greater* and the *Leader*) are terms equivalent, or interpretative the one of the other; and

Acts 15. 22.

1 Tim. 5. 17. Rom 12. 8. 1 Theſſ. 5. 12. Matt. 20. 27. Luke 22. 26.

and our *Lord* in thoſe places as he preſcribeth humility of mind and demeanour; ſo he implieth difference of rank among his Diſciples: whence to render eſpecial reſpect and honour to them, as to our betters, is a duty often enjoined. Phil. 2. 29. 1 Theſſ. 5. 13. 1 Tim. 5. 17.

2. It doth imply power, and authority: their ſuperiority is not barely grounded on perſonal worth or fortune; it ſerveth not merely for order, and pomp; but it ſtandeth upon the nature of their office, and tendeth to uſe: they are by God's appointment enabled to exerciſe acts of power; to command, to judge, to check, controll, and chaſtiſe in a ſpiritual way, in order to ſpiritual ends; (the regulation of God's worſhip and ſervice, the preſervation of order and peace, the promoting of edification in divine knowledge and holineſs of life) ſo are they ἡγέμενοι, as that word in common uſe (as the word ἡγεμὼν of kin to it) doth ſignify *Captains* and *Princes*; importing authority to command and rule; (whence the *Hebrew* word נָשִׂיא a *Prince* is uſually rendred by it; and ὁ ἡγούμενος, is the title, attributed to our *Lord*, to expreſs his Kingly function, being the ſame with ἀρχηγὸς, the *Prince* or *Captain*) Hence are they otherwiſe ſtyled κυβερνήσεις (*Governours*) ἐπίσκοποι (*Overſeers*, or *Superintendents*, as St. *Hierome* rendreth it) *Paſtors* (a word often ſignifying *rule*, and attributed to civil Governours) πρεσβύτεροι (*Elders*, or *Senators*; the word denoteth not merely age, but office and authority) οἱ ἐπιμελοῦντες, *ſuch as take care for*, the *Curators*, or *Supraviſors* of *the Church*: Hence alſo they are ſignally and ſpecially in relation unto God ſtyled δοῦλοι (*the Servants*) διάκονοι (*the Miniſters*) ὑπηρέται (*the Officers*) λειτουργοὶ (*the publick Agents*) οἰκονόμοι (*the Stewards*) συνεργοὶ (*the Coadjutors*, or Aſſiſtants) πρέσβεις (*the Legates*) ἄγγελοι (*the Angels*, or *Meſſengers*) *of God*; which titles imply, that God by them, as his ſubſtitutes and inſtruments, doth adminiſter the affairs of his ſpiritual Kingdom: that as by ſecular Magiſtrates (his Vicegerents and Officers) he manageth his Univerſal temporal Kingdom, or governeth all men in order to their worldly peace and proſperity; ſo by theſe ſpiritual Magiſtrates he ruleth his Church, toward its ſpiritual welfare and felicity. Matt. 2. 6. Acts 5. 31. 1 Cor. 12. 28. Acts 20. 28. Matt. 2. 6. Pſal. 78. 71. 1 Pet. 5. 2. 2 Sam. 5. 2. 7. 7. 1 Tim. 3. 5. 2 Tim. 2. 24. Rom. 15. 16. 1 Cor. 4. 1, 2, 3. 9. 6. 1. 16. 16. 2 Cor. 6. 4. Tit. 1. 2. Gal. 4. 14. Apoc 1. 29.

3. The word alſo doth imply direction, or inſtruction; that is, guidance of people in the way of truth and duty, reclaiming them from errour and ſin: this as it is a means hugely conducing to the deſign of their office, ſo it is a principal member thereof: whence διδάσκαλοι, *Doctours*, or Maſters in doctrine, is a common name of them; and to be διδακτικοὶ, *able and apt to teach* (ἱκανοὶ διδάξαι and πρόθυμοι) is a chief qualification of their perſons; and to *attend on teaching*, to *be inſtant in preaching*, to *labour in the word and doctrine* are their moſt commendable performances: hence alſo they are called *Shepherds*, becauſe they feed the ſouls of God's people with the food of wholſome inſtruction; *Watchmen*, becauſe they obſerve mens ways, and warn them when they decline from right, or run into danger; the *Meſſengers* of God, becauſe they declare God's mind and will unto them for the regulation of their Practice. Eph. 4. 11. 1 Cor. 12. 28. Rom. 12. 7. 1 Tim. 3. 2. 2 Tim. 2. 28. 2. 2. 1 Tim. 4. 13, 16. 5. 17. 2 Tim. 4. 2. Col. 1. 28.

4. The word farther may denote exemplary Practice; for to lead implieth ſo to go before, that he who is conducted may follow; as a Captain marcheth before his troop; as a Shepherd walketh before his flock, as a Guide goeth before the Traveller, whom he directeth; hence they are ſaid to be, and enjoined to behave themſelves *as patterns of the flock*; and the people are charged to imitate, and follow them. 1 Pet. 5. 3. 1 Tim. 4. 12. Phil. 3. 17. Tit. 2. 7. 2 Theſſ. 3. 9, 7. Heb. 3. 7. 1 Theſſ. 1. 6. 1 Cor. 11. 1. 4. 16.

Such

Such in general doth the word here used imply the persons to be, unto whom obedience is prescribed; but there is farther some distinction to be made among them; there are degrees and subordinations in these guidances; some are in regard to different persons both empowred to guide, and obliged to follow, or obey.

1 Pet. 5. 4. Heb. 3. 1.

The Church is *acies ordinata*, a well marshalled Army; wherein under the *Captain General of our faith and salvation* (*the Head of the Body*, the Sovereign Prince and Priest, the *Arch-pastor*, the chief *Apostle of our profession*, and *Bishop of our Souls*) there are divers Captains serving in fit degrees of subordination; Bishops commanding large regiments, Presbyters ordering less numerous companies; all which by the bands of common faith, of mutual charity, of holy communion, and peace being combined together, do in their respective stations govern and guide, are governed and guided: The Bishops, each in his precincts guiding more immediately the Priests subject to them; the Priests, each guiding the people committed to his charge; all Bishops and Priests being guided by Synods established, or congregated upon emergent occasion; many of them ordinarily by those principal Bishops, who are regularly setled in a presidency over them; according to the distinctions constituted by God and his Apostles, or introduced by humane prudence, as the preservation of order and peace (in various times and circumstances of things) hath seemed to require; to which subordination the two great *Apostles* may seem to have regard, when they bid us ὑποτάσσεσθαι ἀλλήλοις, *to be subject to one another*; their injunction at least may, according to their general intent which aimeth at the preservation of order and peace) be well extended so far.

1 Pet. 5. 5. Eph. 5. 21. Phil. 2. 3.
Ὑποτασσέσθω ἕκαστος τῷ πλησίον αὐτοῦ κατὰ τὴν ἐπιδοσιν ἐν τῷ χαρίσματι αὐτοῦ. Clem. *ad* Corinth. *p.* 49.

Cyp. *Ep.* 10. *Ep.* 12.

Of this distinction there was never in ancient times made any question, nor did it seem disputable in the Church, except to one malecontent (*Aerius*) who did indeed get a name in story, but never made much noise, or obtained any vogue in the World: very few followers he found in his heterodoxy; No great body even of *Hereticks* could find cause to dissent from the Church in this point; but all *Arians*, *Macedonians*, *Novatians*, *Donatists*, &c. maintained the distinction of Ecclesiastical orders among themselves, and acknowledged the duty of the inferiour Clergy to their Bishops: and no wonder, seeing it standeth upon so very firm and clear grounds; upon the reason of the case, upon the testimony of Holy Scripture, upon general tradition and unquestionable monuments of antiquity, upon the common judgment and practice of the greatest Saints, persons most renowned for wisedom and piety in the Church.

Ep. 27. *Ep.* 65.

Reason plainly doth require such subordinations; for that without them it is scarce possible to preserve any durable concord, or charity in Christian Societies; to establish any decent harmony in the worship, and service of God, to check odious scandals, to prevent or repress banefull factions, to guard our religion from being overspread with pernicious heresies, to keep the Church from being shattered into numberless Sects, and thence from being crumbled into nothing; in fine, for any good time to uphold the profession and practice of Christianity it self: for how if there be not setled Corporations of Christian People, having bulk and strength sufficient by joint endeavour to maintain the truth, honour, and interest of their religion, if the Church should only consist of independent and incoherent particles (like dust or sand) easily scattered by any wind of opposition from without, or by any commotion within; if *Christendom* should be merely

merely a *Babel* of confuſed opinions and practices, how I ſay, then could Chriſtianity ſubſiſt? how could the ſimple among ſo diſcordant apprehenſions be able to diſcern the truth of it; how would the wiſe be tempted to diſlike it, being ſo mangled and disfigured? what an object of contempt and ſcorn would it be to the profaner World, in ſuch a caſe? It needeth therefore conſiderable Societies to uphold it; but no Society (eſpecially of any large extent) can abide in order and peace, under the management of equal and co-ordinate powers; without a ſingle undivided authority, enabled to moderate affairs, and reduce them to a point, to arbitrate emergent caſes of difference, to put good orders in execution, to curb the adverſaries of order and peace; theſe things cannot be well performed, where there is a parity of many concurrents, apt to diſſent, and able to check each other; no *Democracy* can be ſupported without borrowing ſomewhat from *Monarchy*; no body can live without a head; an Army cannot be without a General, a Senate without a Preſident, a Corporation without a Supreme Magiſtrate: this all experience atteſteth; this even the chief impugners of *Epiſcopal* preſidency do by their practice confeſs; who for prevention of diſorder have been fain of their own heads to deviſe Eccleſiaſtical ſubordinations of *Claſſes*, *Provinces* and *Nations*; and to appoint *Moderatours* (or temporary Biſhops) in their aſſemblies; ſo that reaſon hath forced the diſſenters from the Church to imitate it.

Eccleſiæ ſalus in ſummi Sacerdotis dignitate conſiſtit, cui non exors quædam, & ab omnibus eminens detur poteſtas tot in Eccleſia efficientur ſchiſmata, quot ſacerdotes. Hier. *in* Lucif.

Nec Presbyterorum cœtus ritè conſtitutus dici poteſt, in quo nullus ſit ἡγούμενος. Bez. *de Grad. Min. cap.* 22.

Eſſentiale fuit, quod ex Dei Ordinatione perpetua neceſſe fuit, eſt, & erit, ut Preſbyterio quiſpiam & loco & dignitate Primus actioni gubernandæ præſit cum eo, quod ipſi divinitus attributum eſt jure. Bez. *de Min. Evang. Grad. c.* 23. *p.* 153.

If there be not inſpectours over the doctrine and manners of the common Clergy, there will be many who will ſay and doe any thing; they will in teaching pleaſe their own humour, or ſooth the people, or ſerve their own intereſts; they will indulge themſelves in a licentious manner of life; they will claſh in their doctrines, and ſcatter the people, and draw them into factions.

It is alſo very neceſſary for preſerving the unity and communion of the parts of the Catholick Church; ſeeing ſingle perſons are much fitter to maintain correſpondence, than headleſs bodies.

The very credit of religion doth require, that there ſhould be perſons raiſed above the common level, and endued with eminent authority, to whoſe care the promoting it ſhould be committed; for ſuch as the perſons are who manage any profeſſion, ſuch will be the reſpect yielded thereto; if the miniſters of religion be men of honour and authority, religion it ſelf will be venerable; if *thoſe* be mean, that will become contemptible.

The Holy Scripture alſo doth plainly enough countenance this diſtinction; for therein we have repreſented one *Angel* preſiding over principal Churches, which contained ſeveral *Presbyters*; therein we find Epiſcopal ordination, and juriſdiction exerciſed; we have one Biſhop conſtituting *Presbyters* in divers *Cities* of his *Dioceſe*; Ordering all things therein concerning eccleſiaſtical diſcipline; judging Presbyters, rebuking, μετὰ πάσης ἐπιταγῆς, *with all authority* (or imperiouſneſs, as it were; *Tit.* 2. 15.) and reconciling Offenders, ſecluding Hereticks, and ſcandalous perſons.

Apoc. 2. 3. &c.

Tit. 1. 5. 1 Tim. 5. 1, 17, 19, 20, 22, &c.

In the *Jewiſh* Church there were an *High-prieſt*, *Chief-prieſts*, a *Sanhedrin*, or *Senate*, or *Synod*.

The

The Government of Congregations among God's ancient people (which it is probable was the pattern that the *Apoſtles*, no affecters of needleſs innovation, did follow in eſtabliſhing eccleſiaſtical diſcipline among Chriſtians) doth hereto agree; for in their *Synagogues*, anſwering to our Chriſtian Churches, they had as their *Elders* and *Doctours*, ſo over them an ἀρχισυνάγωγος, the *Head* of the *Elderſhip*, and *Preſident* of the *Synagogue*. ראש הקהל

The primitive general uſe of Chriſtians moſt effectually doth back the Scripture, and interpret it in favour of this diſtinction; ſcarce leſs than demonſtrating it conſtituted by the *Apoſtles*; for how otherwiſe is it imaginable, that all the *Churches* founded by the *Apoſtles* in ſeveral moſt diſtant, and disjoined places (at *Jeruſalem*, at *Antioch*, at *Alexandria*, at *Epheſus*, at *Corinth*, at *Rome*) ſhould preſently conſpire in acknowledgement and uſe of it? how could it without apparent confederacy be formed, how could it creep in without notable clatter, how could it be admitted without conſiderable oppoſition, if it were not in the foundation of thoſe Churches laid by the *Apoſtles*? How is it likely, that in thoſe times of grievous perſecution falling chiefly upon the *Biſhops* (when to be eminent among Chriſtians yielded ſlender reward, and expoſed to extreme hazard; when to ſeek preeminence was in effect to court danger and trouble, torture and ruine) an ambition of irregularly advancing themſelves above their brethren ſhould ſo generally prevail among the ableſt and beſt Chriſtians? How could thoſe famous Martyrs for the Chriſtian truth be ſome of them ſo unconſcionable as to affect, others ſo irreſolute as to yield to ſuch injurious encroachments? and how could all the Holy Fathers (perſons of ſo renowned, ſo approved wiſedom and integrity) be ſo blind as not to diſcern ſuch a corruption, or ſo bad as to abet it? how indeed could all God's Church be ſo weak as to conſent in judgment, ſo baſe as to comply in practice with it? in fine, how can we conceive, that all the beſt monuments of antiquity down from the beginning (the *Acts*, the *Epiſtles*, the *Hiſtories*, the *Commentaries*, the *Writings* of all ſorts coming from the Bleſſed *Martyrs*, and moſt Holy *Confeſſors* of our faith) ſhould conſpire to abuſe us; the which do ſpeak nothing but *Biſhops*; long *Catalogues* and rows of *Biſhops* ſucceeding in this and that *City*; *Biſhops* conteſting for the faith againſt *Pagan* Idolaters, and *Heretical* corrupters of Chriſtian doctrine; *Biſhops* here teaching, and planting our religion by their labours, there ſuffering and watering it with their bloud.

I could not but touch this point: but I cannot inſiſt thereon; the full diſcuſſion of it, and vindication of the truth from the cavils advanced againſt the truth by modern diſſenters from the Church, having employed voluminous Treatiſes; I ſhall onely farther add, that if any man be ſo dully, or ſo affectedly ignorant as not to ſee the reaſon of the caſe, and the dangerous conſequences of rejecting this ancient form of diſcipline; if any be ſo overweeningly preſumptuous, as to queſtion the faith of all Hiſtory, or to diſavow thoſe Monuments and that tradition, upon the teſtimony whereof even the truth and certainty of our religion, and all its ſacred Oracles do rely; if any be ſo perverſely contentious, as to oppoſe the cuſtom, and current practice of the Churches through all ages down to the laſt age; ſo ſelf-conceitedly arrogant, as to condemn or ſlight the judgment, and practice of all the Fathers (together alſo with the opinion of the later moſt grave *Divines*, who have judged Epiſcopal preſidency needfull, or expedient, where practicable) ſo peeviſhly refractary as to thwart the ſetled order of that Church, in which he was baptized, 1 Cor. 11. 16.

baptized, together with the law of the Countrey, in which he was born; upon ſuch a perſon we may look as one utterly invincible, and intractable: ſo weak a judgment, and ſo ſtrong a will who can hope by reaſon to convert? I ſhall ſay no more to that Point.

The ἡγούμενοι then, (the Guides and Governours) in our *Text* are primarily the *Biſhops*, as the Superiour and chief Guides, each in his place according to order peaceably eſtabliſhed; then ſecondarily the *Preſbyters* in their Station as Guides inferiour, together with the *Deacons* as their aſſiſtants; ſuch the Church always hath had, and ſuch by God's bleſſing, our Church now hath, toward whom the duty of obedience is to be performed.

To the conſideration of that I ſhould now proceed, but firſt it ſeemeth expedient to remove a main obſtruction to that performance; which is this; a miſpriſion, or doubt concerning the perſons of our Guides and Governours; for in vain it would be to teach or perſuade us to obey them, if we do not know who they are, or will not acknowledge them: for as in religion it is *Primus Deorum cultus Deos credere, The firſt worſhip of God to believe God* (as *Seneca* ſaith) ſo it is the firſt part of our obedience to our Governours to avow them; it is at leaſt abſolutely prerequiſite thereto. It was of old a precept of St. *Paul* to the *Theſſalonians*; *We beſeech you brethren to know thoſe, who labour among you; and preſide over you*; and another to the *Corinthians*; *Submit your ſelves* (ſaith he) *to ſuch, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth*--then he ſubjoineth, ἐπιγινώσκετε τοὺς τοιούτους, *acknowledge ſuch*; there were, it ſeemeth, thoſe in the *Apoſtolical* times, who would not know, or acknowledge their guides; there were even thoſe, who would not *admit* the *Apoſtles* themſelves, (as Saint *John* ſaith of *Diotrephes*) who *reſiſted their words* (as St. *Paul* ſaith of *Alexander*) to whom the *Apoſtles* were not *Apoſtles*, as St. *Paul* intimateth concerning ſome in regard to himſelf; there were then *Pſeud-apoſtles*, who excluded the *true Apoſtles*, intruding themſelves into that high office: No wonder then it may be, that now in theſe dregs of time, there ſhould be many, who diſavow, and deſert their true Guides, transferring the obſervance due to them upon bold pretenders; who are not indeed Guides, but Seducers; not Governours, but Uſurpers, and ſacrilegious Invaders of this holy Office: The duty we ſpeak of cannot be ſecured without preventing or correcting this grand miſtake; and this we hope to compaſs by repreſenting a double character or deſcription, one of the *true Guides*, another of the *counterfeits*, by comparing which we may eaſily diſtinguiſh them, and conſequently be induced dutifully to avow and follow the one ſort, wiſely to diſclaim and decline the other.

Seu. *Ep.* 95.
1 Theſſ. 5. 12.
1 Cor. 16. 16, 18.
3 John 10.
2 Tim. 4. 15.
2 Cor. 9. 2.
2 Cor. 11. 13.
Phil. 3. 2.

Thoſe, I ſay, then, who conſtantly do profeſs, and teach that ſound and wholſome doctrine, which was delivered by our Lord, and his Apoſtles in word and writing, was received by their Diſciples in the primitive Churches, was tranſmitted and confirmed by general tradition, was ſealed by the bloud of the bleſſed *Martyrs*, and propagated by the labours of the Holy Fathers; the which alſo manifeſtly recommendeth and promoteth true reverence and piety toward God, juſtice and charity toward men, order and quiet in humane Societies, purity and ſobriety in each man's private converſation:

Thoſe who celebrate the true worſhip of God, and adminiſter the Holy Myſteries of our religion in a ſerious, grave, decent manner, purely and without any notorious corruption either by hurtfull errour, or ſuperſtitious foppery, or irreverent rudeneſs, to the advancement of God's

honour, and edification of the participants in vertue and piety.

Thoſe who derive their authority by a continued ſucceſſion from the *Apoſtles*; who are called unto, and conſtituted in their office in a regular and peaceable way, agreeable to the inſtitution of God, and the conſtant practice of his Church; according to rules approved in the beſt and pureſt Ages; who are prepared to the exerciſe of their function by the beſt education, that ordinarily can be provided, under ſober diſcipline, in the Schools of the Prophets, who thence by competent endowments of mind, and uſefull furniture of good learning, acquired by painfull ſtudy, become qualified to guide and inſtruct the people: who after previous examination of their abilities, and probable teſtimonies concerning their manners (with regard to the qualifications of incorrupt doctrine, and ſober converſation
1 Tim. 3. 7, 10. preſcribed by the *Apoſtles*) are adjudged fit for the office; who alſo in a pious, grave, ſolemn manner, with invocation of God's bleſſing, by *laying on the hands of the Presbytery* are admitted thereunto.

Thoſe whoſe practice in guiding and governing the people of God is not managed by arbitrary, uncertain, fickle, private fancies or humours, but regulated by ſtanding Laws; framed (according to general directions extant in Holy Scripture) by pious and wiſe perſons, with mature advice, in accommodation to the ſeaſons and circumſtances of things for common edification, order and peace.

Thoſe who, by virtue of their good principles, in their diſpoſition and demeanour appear ſober, orderly, peaceable, yielding meek ſubmiſſion to Government, tendring the Churches peace, upholding the communion of the Saints, abſtaining from all ſchiſmatical, turbulent and factious practices.

Thoſe alſo, who are acknowledged by the Laws of our Countrey, an
1 Pet. 2. 13. obligation to obey whom is part of that *humane conſtitution*, unto which we are in all things (not evidently repugnant to God's Law) indiſpenſably bound to ſubmit; whom our Sovereign, God's Vicegerent and the nurſing Father of his Church among us (unto whom in all things high reſpect, in all lawfull things entire obedience is due) doth command and encourage us to obey:

Thoſe, I ſay, to whom this character plainly doth agree, we may reaſonably be aſſured, that they are our true Guides and Governours, whom we are obliged to follow and obey: for what better aſſurance can we in reaſon deſire? what more proper marks can be aſſigned to diſcern them by? what methods of conſtituting ſuch needfull officers can be ſetled more anſwerable to their deſign, and uſe? how can it be evil or unſafe to follow guides authorized by ſuch warrants, conformed to ſuch patterns, endowed with ſuch diſpoſitions, acting by ſuch principles and rules? can we miſtake, or miſcarry by complying with the great body of God's Church through all ages, and particularly with thoſe great Lights of the Primitive Church, who by the excellency of their knowledge, and the integrity of their virtue have ſo illuſtrated our Holy Religion?

There are on the other hand ſufficiently plain characters, by which we may deſcry ſeducers, and falſe pretenders to guide us.

1 Tim. 6. 3. Thoſe who do ἑτεροδιδασκαλεῖν, *teach otherwiſe*, or diſcourſe from the
1. 3, 4. good ancient wholſome doctrine, revealed in the Holy *Scripture*, attested
Gal. 1. 9. by *Univerſal Tradition*, profeſſed, taught, maintained to death by the Pri-
1 Tim. 1. 4. 6. 4, 20. mitive *Saints* and *Martyrs*; who affect novelties, uncouth notions, big
2 Tim. 2. 14, 16, 23. words, and dark phraſes, who dote on curious empty ſpeculations, and
Tit. 3. 9. idle queſtions, which engender ſtrife, and yield no good fruit.
2 Pet. 2. 18.

Thoſe

Thoſe who ground their opinions, and warrant their proceedings not by clear teſtimonies of divine revelation, by the dictates of ſound reaſon, by the current authority of wiſe and good men, but by the ſuggeſtions of their own fancy, by the impulſes of their paſſion, and zeal, by pretences to ſpecial inſpiration, by imaginary neceſſities, and ſuch like fallacious rules.

Ipſorum ordinationes temerariæ, inconſtantes, leves. Tertull.

Thoſe who by counterfeit ſhews of mighty zeal, and extraordinary affection, by affected forms of ſpeech, by pleaſing notions, by propheſying *ſmooth things*, *daubing* and *glazing*, by various artifices of flattery and fraud attract and abuſe weak and heedleſs people.

Thoſe who without any apparent commiſſion from God, or allowable call from men, or extraordinary neceſſity of the caſe, in no legal or regular way, according to no cuſtome received in God's Church do intrude themſelves into the office, or are onely aſſumed thereto by ignorant, unſtable, giddy, factious people, ſuch as thoſe of whom St. *Paul* ſaith, that *according to their own luſts they heap up teachers to themſelves, having itching ears.*

Hi ſunt qui ſe ultro apud temerarios convenas ſine divina diſpoſitione præficiunt, qui ſe præpoſitos ſine ulla ordinationis lege conſtituunt, qui nemine Epiſcopatum dante Epiſcopi ſibi nomen aſſumunt. Cypr. *de Un. Eccl. p.* 256.

2 Tim. 4. 3.

Thoſe who are not in reaſonable ways fitly prepared, not duly approved, not competently authorized, not orderly admitted to the office, according to the preſcriptions of God's Word, and the practice of his Church; not entring into the fold by the door, but breaking through, or clambering over the fences of ſober diſcipline.

Thoſe who in their mind, their principles, their deſigns, and all their practice appear void of that charity, that meekneſs, that calmneſs, that gravity, that ſincerity, that ſtability, which qualifie worthy and true Guides: who in the diſpoſition of their mind are froward, fierce, and ſtubborn, in their principles looſe and ſlippery, in their deſigns and behaviour turbulent, diſorderly, violent, deceitfull: who regard not order or peace, but wantonly raiſe ſcandals, create diſſentions, abet and foment diſturbances in the Church. Who under religious appearances indulge their paſſions, and ſerve their intereſts, uſing a guiſe of devotion, and talk about holy things as inſtruments to vent wrath, envy and ſpleen; to drive forward deſigns of ambition and avarice; who will not ſubmit to any certain judgment or rule, will like nothing but what their fancy ſuggeſts, will acknowledge no law but their own will; who for no juſt cauſe, and upon any ſlender pretence withdraw themſelves, and ſeduce others from the Church in which they were brought up, deſerting its communion, impugning its laws, defaming its Governours, endeavouring to ſubvert its eſtabliſhment: Who manage their diſcipline (ſuch as it is of their own framing) unadviſedly and unſteadily, in no ſtable method, according to no ſetled rule; but as preſent conceit, or humour, or advantage prompteth; ſo that not being fixed in any certain judgment or practice, they ſoon claſh with themſelves, and divide from one another; inceſſantly roving from one ſect to another; *being carried about with divers and ſtrange doctrines; like children toſſed to and fro with every wind of doctrine.*

Heb. 13. 9. Eph. 4. 14.

Thoſe, the fruits of whoſe doctrine and managery amount at beſt onely to empty *form of goodlineſs, void of real vertue*; while in truth they fill the minds of men with ill-paſſions, ill-ſurmiſes, ill-will; they produce impious, unjuſt and uncharitable dealing of all kinds, particularly diſcontentfull murmurings, diſobedience to Magiſtrates; ſchiſms and factions in the Church; combuſtions and ſeditions in the State.

In fine thoſe, who in their temper and their deportment reſemble thoſe
2 Tim. 3. 13. ancient ſeducers, branded in the Scripture, thoſe *evil men, who did ſeduce, and were ſeduced*:

Tit. 1. 10. Whoſe diſpoſitions are repreſented in theſe *epithets*: they were ἀνυπότακτοι, *unruly*, or perſons indiſpoſed and unwilling to ſubmit to Govern-
2 Pet. 2. 10. ment; τολμηταὶ, αὐθάδεις, *preſumptuous, and ſelfwilled*, or ſelf-pleaſing darers; γογγυσταὶ, μεμψίμοιροι, *murmurers, complainers*, or conjunctly diſcon-
Tit. 3. 10, 11. tented mutiners; αὐτοκατάκριτοι, *ſelf-condemned*, namely, by contradicti-
2 Tim. 3. 13, 14. ous ſhuffling and ſhifting, or by excommunicating themſelves from the Church; γόητες, *bewitchers*, inveagling and deluding credulous people by
Matt. 7. 15. diſſimulation, and ſpecious appearances; *having a form of godlineſs, but denying the power thereof; being wolves in ſheeps cloathing, grievous wolves not*
Act. 20. 29. *ſparing the flock; deceitfull workers, transforming themſelves into the ſervants*
2 Cor. 11. 13, 15. *of Chriſt, and Miniſters of righteouſneſs; lovers of themſelves, covetous, boa-*
1 Tim. 6. 4. *ſters, proud, revilers, truce-breakers, falſe-accuſers, traytours, heady, high-*
2 Pet. 3. 16. *minded, vain talkers, deceivers, ignorant, unlearned, unſtable:*

Rom. 16. 17, 18. Whoſe practices were; *To cauſe diviſions and offences contrary to received*
(1 Tim. 1. 6, 7.) *doctrine; By good words and fair ſpeeches to deceive the hearts of the ſimple;*
Eph. 4. 14. *---To ſwerve from charity---having turned aſide to vain jangling, deſiring*
Act. 20. 19. *to be teachers of the law, underſtanding neither what they ſay, nor whereof*
2 Tim. 3. 5. *they affirm. To beguile unſtable ſouls; To lie in wait to deceive; To ſpeak*
1 Tim. 6. 4. *perverſe things that they may draw diſciples after them; To creep into hou-*
2 Pet. 2. 18. *ſes captivating ſilly women; To doat about queſtions and ſtrifes of words,*
Jud. 16. *whereof cometh envy, ſtrife, railings, evil ſurmiſings, perverſe diſputings; To*
Tit. 1. 11. *ſpeak ſwelling words of vanity; To admire perſons becauſe of advantage* (or
1 Tim. 4. 2. out of private deſign, for ſelf-intereſt;) *To ſubvert whole houſes, teaching*
Phil. 1. 16, 17. *things which they ought not for filthy lucres ſake; to ſpeak lies in hypocriſie;*
2 Pet. 2. 19. *To preach Chriſt out of envy and ſtrife, not out of good-will, or pure intenti-*
2 Theſſ. 3. 6, 11. *on* (οὐ ἁγνῶς, *not purely*; *To promiſe liberty* to their followers; *To walk*
2 Pet. 2. 10. *diſorderly* (that is, in repugnance to order ſetled in the Church;) *To de-*
Jude 8. *ſpiſe dominion, and without fear to reproach dignities; To ſpeak evil* (raſh-
16. ly) *of thoſe things which they know not* (which are beſide their skill and
9. cognizance) *To ſeparate themſelves*, from the Church.
2 John 9.

Such perſons as theſe, arrogating to themſelves the office of Guides,
Tit. 3. 10. and pretending to lead us we muſt not follow or regard, but are in rea-
2 Theſſ. 3. 6. ſon and conſcience obliged to reject and ſhun them, as the Miniſters of *Sa-*
Rom. 16. 17. *tan*, the Peſts of *Chriſtendom*, the Enemies and Murtherers of Souls.
1 Tim. 6. 5.

It can indeed no-wiſe be ſafe to follow any ſuch Leaders (whatever pretences to ſpecial illumination they hold forth, whatever ſpecious guiſes of ſanctity they bear) who in their doctrine or practice deflect from the great beaten roads of holy Scripture, primitive Tradition, and Catholick practice, roving in bye-paths ſuggeſted to them by their private fancies and humours, their paſſions and luſts, their intereſts and advantages: there have in all ages ſuch counterfeit Guides ſtarted up, having debauched ſome few heedleſs perſons, having erected ſome συναγωγὰς, or petty combinations againſt the regularly ſetled Corporations; but never with any durable ſucceſs or countenance of divine pro-
Jude 13. vidence; but like prodigeous *Meteors*, having cauſed a little gazing, and ſome diſturbance, their Sects have ſoon been diſſipated, and have quite vaniſhed away; the authors and abettors of them being either buried in oblivion, or recorded with ignominy: like that *Theudas* in the ſpeech
Acts 5. 36. of *Gamaliel*; who *roſe up boaſting himſelf to be ſomebody; to whom a number*

of

of men about 400. joined themselves; who was slain, and all as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to nought.

But let thus much suffice to have been spoken concerning the Persons, to whom obedience must be performed.

SERMON XXV.

Of Obedience to our Spiritual Guides and Governours.

HEB. XIII. 17.

Obey them that have the rule over you.

I Proceed to the duty it self, the obedience prescribed, which may (according to the extent in signification of the word πείθεσθαι) be conceived to relate either to the government, or to the doctrine, or to the conversation of the persons specified; implying that we should obey their laws, that we should embrace their doctrine, that we should conform to their practice, according to proper limitations of such performance, respectively:

We begin with the first, as seeming chiefly intended by the words:

Obedience to Ecclesiastical Government; what this doth import we may understand by considering the terms, whereby it is expressed, and those whereby its correlate (spiritual government) is signified; by examples and practice relating to it, by the nature and reason of the matter it self.

Beside the word πείθεσθαι (which is commonly used to signifie all sorts of obedience, chiefly that which is due to Governours) here is added a word serving to explain that, the word ὑπείκειν, which signifieth to yield, give way, or comply; relating (as it seemeth by its being put indefinitely) to all their proceedings in matters concerning their charge. In other places, parallel to our *Text*, it is expressed by ὑποτάσσεσθαι, the same term, by which constantly the subjection due to secular powers (in all the precepts enjoining it) is expressed: Ὁμοίως νεώτεροι ὑποτάγητε πρεσβυτέροις, *In like manner* (or correspondently saith St. *Peter*) *ye younger submit your selves to the elder* (that is, as the Context shews, ye inferiours in the Church obey your superiours; ὑπείκειν both there and otherwhere doth signify the state of inferiority, as ὑποτάσσεσθαι importeth dignity and authority.) And, ὑποτάσσεσθε τοῖς τοιούτοις, *submit your selves unto such, and*

(Tit. 3. 1. Rom. 13. 1. 1 Pet. 2. 13.)

1 Pet. 5. 5.

Luke 22. 26.

1 Cor. 16. 16.

to

Eph. 5. 21. 1 Pet. 5. 5.

to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth, ſaith St. *Paul*; and ἀλλήλοις ὑποτασσόμενοι, *Submitting your ſelves to one another in the fear of God*, that is, yielding conſcientiouſly that ſubmiſſion, which eſtabliſhed order requireth from one to another: whence we may collect, that the duty conſiſteth in yielding ſubmiſſion and compliance to all laws, rules and orders enacted by ſpiritual Governours for the due celebration of God's worſhip, the promoting edification, the conſerving decency, the maintenance of peace; as alſo to the judgments and cenſures in order to the ſame purpoſes adminiſtred by them.

This obedience to be due to them may likewiſe be inferred from the various names and titles attributed to them; ſuch as thoſe of *Prelates*, *Superintendents*, *Paſtours*, *Supraviſours*, *Governours* and *Leaders*; which terms (more largely touched before) do imply command and authority of all ſorts, *Legiſlative*, *Judicial* and *Executive*.

Such obedience alſo Primitive Practice doth aſſert to them: for what authority the Holy *Apoſtles* did aſſume and exerciſe, the ſame we may reaſonably ſuppoſe derived to them; the ſame in kind, although not in peculiarity of manner (by immediate commiſſion from *Chriſt*, with ſupply of extraordinary gifts and graces) and in unlimitedneſs of extent: for they do ſucceed to the Apoſtles in charge and care over the Church, each in his precinct (the Apoſtolical office being diſtributed among them all.) The ſame titles, which the Apoſtles aſſumed to themſelves, they aſcribe to their *Sympresbyters*, requiring the ſame duties from them, and preſcribing obedience to them in the ſame terms; They claimed no more power than was needfull to further edification, and this is requiſite that preſent Governours alſo ſhould have; their practice in government may alſo well be preſumed exemplary to all future Governours: As then we ſee them διατάσσειν, *to order* things, and frame Eccleſiaſtical Conſtitutions, διορθοῦν, *to rectify* things, or reform *defects*, to *impoſe* obſervances *neceſſary*, or expedient to the time; to judge cauſes and perſons, *being ready to avenge* or puniſh *every diſobedience*; to *uſe ſeverity* upon occaſions; with the ſpiritual *rod* to chaſtiſe ſcandalous offenders, *diſorderly walkers*, perſons contumacious and unconformable to their injunctions; to reject hereticks, and baniſh notorious ſinners from communion, warning the faithfull to forbear converſation with them: As they did challenge to themſelves *an authority from Chriſt* to exerciſe theſe and the like acts of ſpiritual dominion and juriſdiction, exacting punctual obedience to them; as we alſo ſee the like acts exerciſed by Biſhops, whom they did conſtitute to feed and rule the Church; ſo we may reaſonably conceive all Governours of the Church (the heirs of their office) inveſted with like authority in order to the ſame purpoſes, and that correſpondent obedience is due to them; ſo that what blame, what puniſhment was due to thoſe, who diſobeyed the Apoſtles, doth in proportion belong to the tranſgreſſours of their duty toward the preſent Governours of the Church; eſpecially conſidering that our Lord promiſed his perpetual preſence and aſſiſtence to the Apoſtles.

Cujus in ſolidum ſinguli participes ſumus. Vid. Cypr. *de Unit. Eccl.*

2 Cor. 10. 8. 13. 10.
To ordain Elders.
To confirm Proſelytes.
To exerciſe Juriſdiction.

1 Cor. 11. 34. Tit. 1. 5. Acts 15. 28. 1 Cor. 5. 12. 2 Cor. 10. 6. 2 Cor. 13. 10. 2 Cor. 4. 21. 12. 21. 13. 2. 2 Theſſ. 3. 6, 14. Tit. 3. 10. 1 Tim. 6. 5. Rom. 16. 17. 2 Cor. 10. 8. 13. 10.

Epiſcopi ſucceſſores Apoſtolorum. Cypr. *Ep.* 27. & *Ep.* 69, &c. *Ep.* 41. & *Ep.* 75. (Firmil.)

Matt. 28. 20.

We may farther obſerve, that accordingly in continual ſucceſſion from the firſt ages, the good Primitive *Biſhops* (the great Patrons and Propagatours of our Religion) did generally aſſume ſuch power, and the people readily did yield obedience; wherein that one did wrongfully uſurp, the other did weakly comply, were neither probable, nor juſt to ſuppoſe; whence general tradition doth alſo confirm our obligation to this duty.

That

That this kind of obedience is required doth alſo farther appear from conſidering the reaſon of things, the condition of the Church, the deſign of Chriſtian Religion.

1. Every Chriſtian Church is a Society; no Society can abide in any comely order, any ſteady quiet, any deſireable proſperity without government; no government can ſtand without correſpondent obligation to ſubmit thereto.

2. Again, The ſtate of Religion under the Goſpel is the Kingdom of Heaven; *Chriſt* our Lord is King of the Church; it he viſibly governeth and ordereth by the ſpiritual Governours as his Subſtitutes and Lieutenants (whence they peculiarly are ſtyled his *Miniſters*, his *Officers*, his *Stewards*, his *Legates*, his *Co-workers*.) When he aſcending up to God's right hand was inveſted with entire poſſeſſion of that royal State, he ſetled them to adminiſter affairs concerning that government in his place and name; *Aſcending up on high he gave gifts unto men.....He gave ſome Apoſtles, ſome Prophets, ſome Evangeliſts, ſome Paſtours and Teachers*; He gave them, that is he appointed them in their office, ſubordinate to himſelf, *for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Miniſtery, for the edifying of the body of Chriſt*; As to him therefore ruling by them, by them enacting laws, diſpenſing juſtice, maintaining order and peace, obedience is due. Eph. 4. 8, 11, 12.

3. Again, For the honour of God, the commendation of Religion, and benefit of the People, it is needfull, that in all religious performances things ſhould, according to St. *Paul's* rule, be performed *decently, and according to order*, without unhandſome confuſion, and troubleſome diſtraction; this cannot be accompliſhed without a determination of perſons, of modes, of circumſtances appertaining to thoſe performances (for how can any thing be performed decently, if every perſon hath not his rank and ſtation, his office and work allotted to him; if to every thing to be done, its time, its place, its manner of performance be not aſſigned, ſo that each one may know what, when, where, and how he muſt doe?) ſuch determination muſt be committed to the diſcretion and care of ſome perſons, impowered to frame ſtanding laws or rules concerning it, and to ſee them duly executed (for all perſons without delay, ſtrife, confuſion, and diſturbance cannot meddle in it) with theſe perſons all the reſt of the body muſt be obliged to comply; otherwiſe all ſuch determinations will be vain and ineffectual. Such order reaſon doth recommend in every proceeding; ſuch order eſpecially becometh the grandeur and importance of ſacred things; ſuch order God hath declared himſelf to approve, and love, eſpecially in his own houſe, among his people, in matters relating to his ſervice; for *He is not* (as St. *Paul* ſaith, arguing to this purpoſe) *the God of confuſion, but of peace, in all Churches of the Saints.* (1 Cor. 14. 23. Tit. 2. 10.) 1 Cor. 14. 40. 1 Cor. 14. 33.

4. Again, It is requiſite that all Chriſtian brethren ſhould conſpire in ſerving God with mutual charity, hearty concord, harmonious conſent; that (as the *Apoſtles* ſo often preſcribed) they *ſhould endeavour to keep unity of ſpirit in the bond of peace*: That they ſhould *be like-minded, having the ſame love, being of one accord, of one mind, ſtanding faſt in one ſpirit, with one mind*; *That they ſhould walk by the ſame rule, and mind the ſame thing*; *That with one mind, and one mouth they ſhould glorify God, the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; *That they ſhould all ſpeak the ſame thing*; *and that there be no diviſions among them, but that they be perfectly joined together in the ſame mind, and in the ſame judgment*; (like thoſe in the *Acts*, of whom it is ſaid, *The multitude of believers had one heart*, Σύμψυχοι. Phil. 2. 2. Ὁμόφρονες. 1 Pet. 3. 8. Eph. 4. 3. Phil. 2. 2. 1. 27. Phil. 3. 16. Rom. 15. 5, 6. 12. 16. 2 Cor. 13. 11. 1 Cor. 1. 10. Acts 4. 32.

1 Cor. 12. 25. 11. 18. 1. 11. 3. 3. 2 Cor. 12. 20. Phil. 2. 14. *heart, and one ſoul*) *That there ſhould be no ſchiſms* (diviſions, or factions) *in the body*; that all diſſenſions, all *murmurings*, all emulations ſhould be diſcarded from the Church: the which precepts, ſecluding an obligation to obedience, would be impoſſible, and vain; for (without continual miracle, and transforming humane nature, things not to be expected from God, who apparently deſigneth to manage Religion by ordinary ways of humane prudence, his gratious aſſiſtence concurring) no durable concord in any Society can ever effectually be maintained otherwiſe than by one publick reaſon, will and ſentence, which may repreſent, connect, and comprize all; in defect of that every one will be of a ſeveral opinion about what is beſt, each will be earneſt for the prevalence of his model and way; there will be ſo many Law-givers as Perſons, ſo many differences as matters incident; nothing will paſs ſmoothly and quietly, without bickering and jangling; and conſequently without animoſities, and feuds; whence no unanimity, no concord, ſcarce any charity or good-will can ſubſiſt.

5. Farther, in conſequence of theſe things common edification requireth ſuch obedience: It is the duty of Governours to order all things to this end, that is, to the maintenance, encouragement, and improvement of piety; 2 Cor. 13. 10. 10. 8. for this purpoſe their authority was given them, (as St. *Paul* ſaith) and therefore it muſt be deemed thereto conducible: it is indeed very neceſſary to edification, which without diſcipline guiding the ſimple and ignorant, reclaiming the erroneous and preſumptuous, cheriſhing the regular, and correcting the refractary, can no-wiſe be promoted.

Excluding it, there can be no means of checking or redreſſing ſcandals, which to the reproach of Religion, to the diſgrace of the Church, to the 1 Tim. 1. 19. 6. 5. corrupting the minds, and infecting the manners of men will ſpring up, 2 Tim. 2. 16, 17, 18. and ſpread. Neither can there be any way to prevent the riſe and growth of pernicious errours, or hereſies; the which aſſuredly in a ſtate of unreſtrained liberty the wanton and wicked minds of men will breed, their licen- 2 Tim. 2. 16. Tit. 1. 11. 2 Tim. 2. 17. tious practice will foſter, and propagate; to *the encreaſe of all impiety*; *their mouths muſt be ſtopped*, otherwiſe *they will ſubvert whole houſes, teaching things which they ought not for filthy lucre ſake*; *the word* of naughty ſeducers *will ſpread like a gangrene*, if there be no corroſive or corrective remedy to ſtay its progreſs.

Where things are not managed in a ſtable, quiet, orderly way, no good practice can flouriſh, or thrive; diſſenſion will choak all good affections, confuſion will obſtruct all good proceedings; from anarchy emulation and ſtrife will certainly grow, and from them all ſorts of wickedneſs; for Jam. 3. 16. *where* (ſaith St. *James*) there is *emulation and ſtrife, there is confuſion, and every evil thing.*

All thoſe benefits, which ariſe from holy communion in offices of piety and charity (from common prayers and praiſes to God, from participation in all ſacred ordinances, from mutual advice, admonition, encouragement, conſolation, good example) will together vaniſh with diſcipline; theſe depend upon the friendly union and correſpondence of the members; and no ſuch union can abide without the ligament of diſcipline, no ſuch correſpondence can be upheld without unanimous compliance to publick order. The cement of diſcipline wanting, the Church will not be like a *ſpi-* 1 Pet. 2. 5. *ritual houſe*, compacted of *lively ſtones* into one goodly pile; but like a company of ſcattered pebles, or a heap of rubbiſh.

So conſidering the reaſon of things, this obedience will appear needfull; to enforce the practice thereof we may adjoin ſeveral weighty conſiderations.

Con-

Conſider obedience what it is, whence it ſprings, what it produceth, each of thoſe reſpects will engage us to it.

It is in it ſelf a thing very good and acceptable to God, very juſt and equal, very wiſe, very comely and pleaſant.

It cannot but be gratefull unto God, who is the God of love, of order, of peace, and therefore cannot but like the means furthering them; he cannot but be pleaſed to ſee men doe their duty, eſpecially that which regardeth his own Miniſters; in the reſpect performed to whom he is himſelf indeed avowed, and honoured, and obeyed.

Tempus eſt, —— ut de ſubmiſſione provocent in ſe Dei clementiam, & de honore debito in Dei ſacerdotem eliciant in ſe divinam miſericordiam. Cypr. *Ep.* 30.

It is a juſt and equal thing, that every member of ſociety ſhould ſubmit to the laws, and orders of it; for every man is ſuppoſed upon thoſe terms to enter into, and to abide in it; every man is deemed to owe ſuch obedience in anſwer to his enjoyment of privileges, and partaking of advantages thereby; ſo therefore whoever pretendeth a title to thoſe excellent immunities, benefits and comforts, which communion with the Church affordeth, it is moſt equal, that he ſhould contribute to its ſupport and welfare, its honour, its peace; that conſequently he ſhould yield obedience to the orders appointed for thoſe ends. Peculiarly equal it is in regard to our ſpiritual Governours, who are obliged to be very ſolicitous and laborious in furthering our beſt good; who ſtand deeply engaged, and are reſponſible for the welfare of our ſouls: they muſt be contented to *ſpend, and be ſpent*, to undergo any pains, any hardſhips, any dangers and croſſes occurring in purſuance of thoſe deſigns; and is it not then plainly equal (is it not indeed more than equal, doth not all ingenuity and gratitude require?) that we ſhould encourage, and comfort them in bearing thoſe burthens, and in diſcharging thoſe incumbencies by a fair and chearfull compliance? 'tis the *Apoſtle*'s enforcement of the duty in our Text: *Obey them* (ſaith he) *and ſubmit your ſelves; for they watch for your ſouls, as thoſe, who are to render an accompt, that they may doe it with joy, and not with grief* (or groaning.)

Is it not indeed extreme iniquity and ingratitude, when they with anxious care, and earneſt toil are endeavouring our happineſs, that we ſhould vex and trouble them by our perverſe and croſs behaviour?

Nay, is it not palpable folly to doe thus, ſeeing thereby we do indiſpoſe and hinder them from effectually diſcharging their duty to our advantage? ἀλυσιτελὲς γὰρ ὑμῖν τοῦτο, *for this* (addeth the *Apoſtle*, farther preſſing the duty) *is unprofitable to you*, or it tendeth to your diſadvantage and damage; not onely as involving guilt, but as inferring loſs; the loſs of all thoſe ſpiritual benefits, which Miniſters being encouraged, and thence performing their office with alacrity and ſprightfull diligence would procure to you: it is therefore our wiſedom to be obedient, becauſe obedience is ſo advantageous and profitable to us.

The ſame is alſo a comely and amiable thing, yielding much grace, procuring great honour to the Church, highly adorning and crediting Religion: It is a goodly ſight to behold things proceeding orderly; to ſee every perſon quietly reſting in his poſt, or moving evenly in his rank; to obſerve ſuperiours calmly leading, inferiours gladly following, and equals lovingly accompanying each other: this is the *Pſalmiſt*'s, *Ecce quam bonum! Behold, how* (admirably) *good, and how pleaſant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!* ſuch a ſtate of things argueth the good temper, and wiſedom of perſons ſo demeaning themſelves, the excellency of the principles, which do guide, and act them, the goodneſs Pſal. 139. 1.

of the conſtitution which they obſerve; ſo it crediteth the Church, and graceth Religion; a thing which (as St. *Paul* teacheth) *in all things* we ſhould endeavour.

Tit. 2. 10. 5.

It is alſo a very pleaſant and comfortable thing to live in obedience; by it we enjoy tranquillity of mind, and ſatisfaction of conſcience, we taſte all the ſweets of amity and peace, we are freed from the ſtings of inward remorſe, we eſcape the grievances of diſcord and ſtrife.

The cauſes alſo and principles, from which obedience ſpringeth, do much commend it: it ariſeth from the diſpoſitions of ſoul, which are moſt Chriſtian, and moſt humane; from charity, humility, meekneſs, ſobriety of mind, and calmneſs of paſſion; the which always diſpoſe men to ſubmiſs, complaiſant, peaceable demeanour toward all men, eſpecially toward thoſe, whoſe relation to them claimeth ſuch demeanour; theſe a genuine, free, cordial and conſtant obedience do ſignify to live in the ſoul; together with a general honeſty of intention, and exemption from baſe deſigns.

In fine, innumerable and ineſtimable are the benefits and good fruits accruing from this practice; Beſide the ſupport it manifeſtly yieldeth to the Church, the graceefulneſs of order, the conveniences and pleaſures of peace, it hath alſo a notable influence upon the common manners of men, which hardly can ever prove very bad, where the Governours of the Church do retain their due reſpect and authority; nothing more powerfully doth inſtigate to vertue, than the countenance of authority, nothing more effectually can reſtrain from exorbitancy of vice, than the bridle of diſcipline: this obvious experience demonſtrateth, and we ſhall plainly ſee, if we reflect upon thoſe times when piety and vertue have moſt flouriſhed: whence was it, that in thoſe good old times Chriſtians did ſo abound in good works, that they burnt with holy zeal, that they gladly would doe, would ſuffer any thing for their Religion? whence but from a mighty reſpect to their ſuperiours; from a ſtrict regard to their direction and diſcipline? did the *Biſhops* then preſcribe long faſts, or impoſe rigid penances? willingly did the people undergo them; did the *Paſtour* conduct into danger, did he lead them into the very jaws of death, and martyrdom? the flock with a reſolute alacrity did follow; did a *Prelate* interdict any practice ſcandalous, or prejudicial to the Church; under pain of incurring cenſure? Every man trembled at the conſequences of tranſgreſſing: No terrour of worldly power, no ſeverity of juſtice, no dread of corporal puniſhment had ſuch efficacy to deterr men from ill-doing as the reproof and cenſure of a Biſhop; his frown could avail more than the menaces of an Emperour, than the rage of a Perſecutour, than the rods and axes of an Executioner: No rod indeed did ſmart like the ſpiritual rod, no ſword did cut ſo deep as that of the ſpirit; no loſs was then ſo valuable, as being deprived of ſpiritual advantages; no baniſhment was ſo grievous as being ſeparated from holy communion; no ſentence of death was ſo terrible, as that which cut men off from the Church: No thunder could aſtoniſh or affright men like the crack of a ſpiritual *anathema*: This was that which kept vertue in requeſt, and vice in deteſtation; hence it was that men were ſo good, that Religion did ſo thrive, that ſo frequent, and ſo illuſtrious examples of piety did appear: Hence indeed we may well reckon that Chriſtianity did (under ſo many diſadvantages, and oppoſitions) ſubſiſt, and grow

Neque hoc ità dixerim, ut negligatur Eccleſiaſtica diſciplina, & permittatur quiſquam facere quod velit ſine ulla correptione, & quadam medicinali vindicta, & terribili lenitate, & charitatis ſeveritate. Aug. *adv.* Petil. 3. 4.

grow up; obedience to Governours was its guard; that kept the Church firmly united in a body ſufficiently ſtrong to maintain it ſelf againſt all aſſaults of faction within, of oppoſition from abroad; that preſerved that concord, which diſpoſed and enabled Chriſtians to defend their Religion againſt all fraud and violence: that cheriſhed the true vertue, and the beautifull order, which begot veneration to Religion; to it therefore we owe the life and growth of Chriſtianity, ſo that through many ſharp perſecutions it hath held up its head; through ſo many perillous diſeaſes it hath kept its life untill this day. There were not then of old any ſuch cavils and clamours againſt every thing preſcribed by Governours; there were no ſuch unconſcionable ſcruples, no ſuch hardhearted pretences to tender conſcience deviſed to baffle the authority of ſuperiours; had there been ſuch, had men then commonly been ſo froward and factious as now, the Church had been ſoon ſhivered into pieces, our Religion had been ſwallowed up in confuſion, and licentiouſneſs.

If again we on the other hand fix our conſideration upon diſobedience, (the nature, the ſources, the conſequences thereof) it will, I ſuppoſe, much conduce to the ſame effect, of perſuading us to the practice of this duty:

It is in it ſelf a heinous ſin, being the tranſgreſſion of a command in nature and conſequence very important, upon which God layeth great ſtreſs, which is frequently inculcated in Scripture, which is fenced by divers other Precepts, which is preſſed by ſtrong arguments, and backed by ſevere threatnings of puniſhment upon the tranſgreſſours.

It is in its nature a kind of apoſtaſie from Chriſtianity, and rebellion againſt our Lord; for as he that refuſeth to obey the King's Magiſtrates in adminiſtration of their office is interpreted to diſcliam his authority, and to deſign rebellion againſt him; ſo they who obſtinately diſobey the Miniſters of our Lord's ſpiritual Kingdom, do thereby appear to diſavow him, to ſhake off his yoke, to impeach his reign over them; ſo doth he himſelf interpret and take it: *He* (ſaith our Lord) *that heareth you, heareth me, and he that* (ὁ ἀθετῶν, *that baffleth*) *deſpiſeth you, deſpiſeth me*; and, *If any man neglect to hear the Church* (or ſhall diſobey it, ἐὰν παρακούσῃ) *let him be to thee as a heathen, and a publican*; that is, ſuch a refractary perſon doth by his contumacy put himſelf into the ſtate of one removed from *the Commonwealth of Iſrael*, he forfeiteth the ſpecial protection of God, he becometh as an alien, or an Outlaw from the Kingdom of our Lord. Luke 10. 16. Matt. 10. 40. 12. 17.

Nec putent ſibi vitæ aut ſalutis conſtare rationem, ſi Epiſcopis & Sacerdotibus obtemperare noluerint; cùm in Deutron. Deus dicat, &c. Cypr. *Ep.* 61.

Under the *Moſaical* Diſpenſation thoſe *who would doe preſumptuouſly, and would not hearken unto the Prieſt, that ſtood to miniſter before the Lord*, did incur capital puniſhment; thoſe who factiouſly murmured againſt *Aaron*, are ſaid to make an inſurrection againſt God, and anſwerably were puniſhed in a miraculous way (*The Lord made a new thing, the earth opened, and ſwallowed them up; they went down alive into the pit.*) It was in the Prophetical times an expreſſion ſignifying height of impiety; *My people is as thoſe, who ſtrive with the Prieſt:* Seeing then God hath no leſs regard to his peculiar Servants now than he had then; ſeeing they no leſs repreſent him, and act by his authority now, than any did then; ſeeing their ſervice is as pretious to him, and as much tendeth to his honour now, as the *Levitical* ſervice then did; ſeeing he no leſs loveth order and peace in the *Church*, than he did in the Deut. 17. 12. Num. 16. 11, 30. Hoſ. 4. 4.

Quo exemplo oſtenditur, & probatur obnoxios omnes & culpæ & pœnæ futuros, qui ſe ſchiſmaticis contra præpoſitos & ſacerdotes irreligioſâ temeritate miſcuerint. Cypr. *Ep.* 76.

Synagogue; we may well ſuppoſe it a no leſs heinous ſin, and odious to God, to deſpiſe the Miniſters of *Chriſt*'s Goſpel, than it was before to deſpiſe the Miniſters of *Moſes* his Law.

It is a ſin indeed, pregnant with divers ſins, and involving the breach of many great commands, which are frequently propoſed and preſſed in the *New Teſtament*, with deſign in great part to guard and ſecure it; *That of doing all things in charity*, of *doing all things without murmurings, and diſſentions, of purſuing peace ſo far as lieth in us*, of maintaining unity, concord, unanimity in devotion, of avoiding ſchiſms, and diſſentions, and the like; which are all notoriouſly violated by this diſobedience; it includeth the moſt high breach of charity, the moſt formal infringing peace, the moſt ſcandalous kind of diſcord that can be, to croſs our Superiours.

1 Cor. 16. 14. Phil. 2. 14. Rom. 12. 18. 2 Tim. 2. 22. Heb. 12. 14. Mark 9. 10.

An eſſe ſibi cum Chriſto videtur, qui adverſus ſacerdotes Chriſti facit? &c. Cypr. *de Unit. Eccl. p.* 258.

It is alſo a practice iſſuing from the worſt diſpoſitions of ſoul, ſuch as are moſt oppoſite to the ſpirit of our Religion, and indeed very repugnant to common reaſon, and humanity; from a proud haughtineſs, or vain wantonneſs of mind, from the irregularity of unmortified, and unbridled paſſion, from exorbitant ſelfiſhneſs (ſelfiſhneſs of every bad kind, ſelf-conceit, ſelf-will, ſelf-intereſt) from turbulent animoſity, froward croſneſs of humour, rancorous ſpite, perverſe obſtinacy; from envy, ambition, avarice, and the like ill ſources, the worſt fruits of the fleſh and corrupt nature; to ſuch diſpoſitions the rejecting God's *Prophets* of old, and the non-compliance with the *Apoſtles* are aſcribed in *Scripture*; and from the ſame the like neglect of God's Meſſengers now do proceed; as whoever will obſerve may eaſily diſcern; do but mind the diſcourſes of factious people, you ſhall perceive them all to breathe generally nothing but ill-nature.

The fruits alſo, which it produceth, are extremely bad; manifold great inconveniences and miſchiefs, hugely prejudicing the intereſt of Religion, and the welfare of the Church.

Vid. Cypr. *Ep.* 55. *Neque enim aliunde, &c.*

It is immediately and formally a violation of order, and peace; whence all the wofull conſequences of diſorder and faction do adhere thereto.

Inde Schiſmata, & Hæreſes obortæ ſunt, & oriuntur, dum Epiſcopus, qui unus eſt, & Eccleſiæ præeſt ſuperbâ quorundam præſumptione contemnitur. Cypr. *Ep.* 69.

Hæc ſunt initia Hæreticorum, & ortus atque conatus Schiſmaticorum malè cogitantium ut ſibi placeant, ut præpoſitum ſuperbo tumore contemnant. Sic de Eccleſia receditur, ſic altare profanum foris collocatur, ſic contra pacem Chriſti, atque unitatem Dei rebellatur. Cypr. *Ep.* 65.

It breedeth great diſgrace to the Church, and ſcandal to Religion, for what can appear more ugly than to ſee among the Profeſſours of Religion Children oppoſing their Fathers, Scholars conteſting with their Maſters, Inferiours ſlighting and croſſing their Superiours? what can more expoſe the Church and Religion to the contempt, to the deriſion of *Atheiſts* and *Infidels*, of profane and lewd perſons, of wild *Hereticks*, and *Schiſmaticks*, of all enemies unto truth and piety, than ſuch foul irregularity?

It corrupteth the minds and manners of men; for when that diſcipline is relaxed, which was ordained to guard truth, and promote holineſs; when men are grown ſo licentious, and ſtubborn, as to contemn their Superiours, to diſregard their wholſome laws, and ſober advice, there can be no curb to reſtrain them; but down precipitantly they run into all kind of vitious irregularities and exceſſes; when thoſe mounds are taken away, whither will men ramble; when thoſe banks are broken down, what can we expect but deluges of impious doctrine, and wicked practice to overflow the ignorant and inconſiderate people?

Eccleſiæ gloria præpoſiti gloria eſt. Cypr. *Ep.* 7. *Ep.* 55.

Doth

Doth not indeed this practice evidently tend to the diſſolution of the Church, and deſtruction of Chriſtianity? for when the *Shepherds* are (as to conduct and efficacy) *taken away*, will *not the Sheep be ſcattered*, or *wander aſtray*, *like Sheep without a Shepherd*, being bewildred in various errours, and expoſed as a prey to any wild beaſts; to *the grievous wolves*, to *the ravenous lions*, to the wily Foxes? here a fanatical Enthuſiaſt will ſnap them, there a profane Libertine will worry them, there again a deſperate Atheiſt will tear and devour them. Matt. 26. 31.

Τῶν πολλῶν τὴν αἰτίαν ἐκείνων ἐστὶν, ὅτι τὰ τῶν ἀρχόντων ἠφανίσθη, αἰδὼς, εὐλάβεια αἰδὼς, δέος φόβος, &c. Chryſ. *in* 2 Tim. Or. 2.

Conſult we but obvious experience, and we ſhall ſee, what ſpoils and mines of faith, of good conſcience, of common honeſty and ſobriety this practice hath in a few years cauſed: how have *Atheiſm* and *Infidelity*, how have profaneneſs and diſſoluteneſs of manners, how have all kinds of diſhoneſty and baſeneſs grown up ſince men began to diſregard the authority of their ſpiritual Guides? what diſmal tragedies have we in our age beheld acted upon this ſtage of our own Countrey; what bloudy wars and murthers (murthers of *Princes*, of *Nobles*, of *Biſhops* and *Prieſts*) what miſerable oppreſſions, extortions and rapines; what execrable ſeditions and rebellions; what barbarous animoſities, and feuds, what abominable treaſons, ſacrileges, perjuries, blaſphemies; what horrible violations of all juſtice and honeſty? and what I pray was the ſource of theſe things? where did they begin? where but at murmuring againſt, at rejecting, at perſecuting the ſpiritual Governours, at caſting down and trampling on their authority; at ſlighting and ſpurning at their advice? ſurely would men have obſerved the Laws, or have hearkned to the Counſels of thoſe grave and ſober perſons, whom God had appointed to direct them, they never would have run into the commiſſion of ſuch enormities.

It is not to be omitted, that in the preſent ſtate of things the guilt of diſobedience to ſpiritual Goverhours is encreaſed and aggravated by the ſupervenient guilt of another diſobedience to the Laws of our Prince and Countrey; Before the ſecular powers (unto whom God hath committed the diſpenſation of juſtice, with the maintenance of peace and order in reference to worldly affairs) did ſubmit to our Lord, and became *nurſing parents of the Church*, the power of managing Eccleſiaſtical matters did wholly reſide in ſpiritual Guides; unto whom Chriſtians, as the *peculiar* ſubjects of God, were obliged willingly to yield obedience; and refuſing it were guilty before God of ſpiritual diſorder, faction, or ſchiſm; but now after that political authority (out of pious zeal for God's ſervice, out of a wiſe care to prevent the influences of diſorder in ſpiritual matters upon the temporal peace, out of gratefull return for the advantages the Commonwealth enjoyeth from Religion, and the Church) hath pleaſed to back and fortifie the Laws of ſpiritual Governours by civil ſanctions, the knot of our obligation is tied faſter, its force is redoubled, we by diſobedience incur a double guilt, and offend God two ways; both as Supreme Governour of the World, and as King of the Church; to our ſchiſm againſt the Church we add rebellion againſt our Prince; and ſo become no leſs bad Citizens, than bad Chriſtians; Some may perhaps imagine their diſobedience hence more excuſable, taking themſelves now onely thereby to tranſgreſs a political Sanction; but (beſide that even that were a great offence, the command of our temporal Governours being ſufficient, out of conſcience to God's expreſs will, to oblige us in all things not evidently repugnant to God's Law) it is a great miſtake to think the civil law doth any-wiſe derogate from the Eccleſiaſtical; that

that doth not ſwallow this up, but ſuccoureth and corroborateth it; their concurrence yieldeth an acceſſion of weight, and ſtrength to each; they do not by conſpiring to preſcribe the ſame thing either of them ceaſe to be Governours, as to right; but in efficacy the authority of both ſhould thence be augmented; ſeeing the obligation to obedience is multiplied upon their ſubjects; and to diſobey them is now two crimes, which otherwiſe ſhould be but one.

SERMON XXVI.

Of Obedience to our Spiritual Guides and Governours.

HEB. XIII. 17.

Obey them that have the rule over you.

SUCH is the nature of this duty, and ſuch are the reaſons enforcing the practice thereof; I ſhall onely farther remove two impediments of that practice; and ſo leave this Point.

Μάλιστα γὰρ ἀπὸ λόγων χειρωθῆναι οὐκ ἐφεῖται τοῦς βίαν ἐπανορθοῦν τὰ ἧττον ἁμαρτανόντων παίσμασι, &c. Chryſ. de Sacerd. 2.

Ἔνταῦθα οὐ βιαζόμεθα, ἀλλὰ πείθοντα δεῖ πολλὴν ἐνεῖναι φιλοσοφίαν. Ibid.

Matth. 20. 27. Luke 22. 26. 1 Pet. 5. 3.

1. One hindrance of obedience is this, that ſpiritual power is not deſpotical, or compulſory, but parental or paſtoral; that it hath no external force to abet it, or to avenge diſobedience to its laws: they muſt not καταξουσάζειν, or κατακυριεύειν, (be imperious, or domineer) they are not allowed to exerciſe violence, or to inflict bodily correction; but muſt rule in meek and gentle ways, directly influential upon the mind and conſcience, (ways of rational perſuaſion, exhortation, admonition, reproof) *in meekneſs inſtructing thoſe that oppoſe themſelves*; —*convincing, rebuking, exhorting with all long-ſuffering, and doctrine*: their word is their onely weapon, their force of argument all the conſtraint they apply; hence men commonly do not ſtand in awe of them, nor are ſo ſenſible of their obligation to obey them; they cannot underſtand why they ſhould be frighted by words, or controlled by an unarmed authority.

2 Tim. 2. 24. 4. 2. 1 Tim. 3. 3.

But this in truth (things being duly conſidered) is ſo far from diminiſhing our obligation, or arguing the authority of our Governours to be weak and precarious, that it rendreth our obligation much greater, and their authority more dreadfull; for the ſweeter and gentler their way of governing is, the more diſingenuous and unworthy a thing it is to diſobey it; not to be perſuaded by reaſon, not to be allured by kindneſs, not to admit friendly advice, not to comply with the calmeſt methods of further-

ing

ing our own good, is a brutiſh thing; he that onely can be ſcared and ſcourged to duty, ſcarce deſerveth the name of a man: it therefore doth the more oblige us, that in this way we are moved to action by love rather than fear: Yet if we would fear wiſely and juſtly, (not like Children, being frighted with formidable ſhapes, and appearances, but like men apprehending the real conſequences of things) we ſhould the more fear theſe ſpiritual Powers, becauſe they are inſenſible: for that God hath commanded us to obey them, without aſſigning viſible forces to conſtrain or chaſtiſe, is a manifeſt argument, that he hath reſerved the vindication of their authority to his own hand, which therefore will be infallibly certain, and terribly ſevere; ſo the nature of the caſe requireth, and ſo God hath declareth it ſhall be; The Sentence that is upon Earth pronounced by his Miniſters upon contumacious Offenders, he hath declared himſelf ready to ratifie in Heaven, and therefore moſt aſſuredly will execute it: As under the Old Law God appointed to the tranſgreſſion of ſome laws, upon which he laid ſpecial ſtreſs, the puniſhment of *being cut off from his people*; the execution of which puniſhment he reſerved to himſelf to be accompliſhed in his own way, and time; ſo doth he now in like manner take upon him to maintain the cauſe of his Miniſters; and to execute the judgments decreed by them; and if ſo, we may conſider that *it is a dreadfull thing to fall into the hands of the living God*: Eccleſiaſtical Authority therefore is not a ſhadow, void of ſubſtance or force, but hath the greateſt power in the World to ſupport, and aſſert it; it hath arms to maintain it moſt effectual and forcible (thoſe of which St. *Paul* ſaith; *The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God---*) it inflicteth chaſtiſements far more dreadfull, than any ſecular power can inflict; for theſe onely touch the body, thoſe pierce the ſoul; theſe concern onely our temporal ſtate, thoſe reach eternity it ſelf; theſe at moſt yield a tranſitory ſmart, or kill the body, thoſe produce endleſs torment; and (utterly as to all comfort in being) deſtroy the ſoul.

Matt. 18. 18. Heb. 10. 31. 2 Cor. 10. 4.

The puniſhment for extreme contumacy is called *delivery to Satan*; and is not this far worſe than to be put into the hands of any Gaoler or Hangman? what are any chords of hemp, or fetters of iron in compariſon to thoſe bands, of which 'tis ſaid, *Whatever ye bind on earth, ſhall be bound in heaven*; which engage the ſoul in a guilt, never to be looſed, except by ſore contrition, and ſerious repentance? what are any ſcourges to St. *Paul*'s rod, laſhing the heart and conſcience with ſtinging remorſe; what any axes or faulchions to that *ſword of the ſpirit*; which cutteth off a member from the body of Chriſt? what are any faggots and torches to that unquenchable *fire and brimſtone* of the infernal lake? what, in fine, doth any condemnation here ſignifie to that horrible curſe, which devoteth an incorrigible ſoul to the bottomleſs pit?

Spiritali gladio ſuperbi & contumaces necantur, dum de Eccleſia ejiciuntur. Cypr. Ep. 61.

It is therefore indeed a great advantage to this power that it is ſpiritual.

2. Another grand obſtruction to the practice of this duty is, pretence to ſcruple about the lawfulneſs, or diſſatisfaction in the expedience of that, which our Governours preſcribe, that we are able to advance objections againſt their decrees, that we can eſpy inconveniences, enſuing upon their orders; that we imagine the conſtitution may be reformed, ſo as to become more pure, more convenient, and comely, more ſerviceable to edification; that we cannot fanſie that to be beſt, which they enjoy: For removing this obſtruction let me only propound ſome queſtions.

Cypr. Ep. 50. & 52. (p. 97.)

Were

Φιλοίνους οἶνος ἡ λειψις, ἡδὺ φιλονείκῳ μάχη. Socr. *hist.* 7. 31.

Were not any Government appointed in vain, if such pretences might exempt, or excuse from conformity to its orders? can such ever be wanting? is there any thing deviseable, which may not be impugned by some plausible reason, which may not disgust a squeamish humour? is there any matter so clearly innocent, the lawfulness whereof a weak mind will not question, any thing so firm and solid, in which a small acuteness of wit cannot pick a hole, any thing so indisputably certain, that whoever affecteth to cavil may not easily devise some objections against it?

Is there any thing here that hath no inconveniences attending it? are not in all humane things, conveniences and inconveniences so mixt and complicated, that it is impossible to disintangle and sever them? can there be any constitution under Heaven so absolutely pure and perfect, that no blemish or defect shall appear therein? can any providence of man foresee, any care prevent, any industry remedy all inconveniences possible? Is a reformation satisfactory to all fancies any-wise practicable; and are they not fitter to live in a *Platonick Idea* of a Commonwealth, than in any real society, who press for such an one? to be facile and complaisant in other cases, bearing with things which do not please us, is esteemed commendable, a courteous and humane practice, why should it not be much more reasonable to condescend to our Superiours, and comport with their practice? is it not very discourteous to deny them the respect which we allow to others, or to refuse that advantage to publick transactions, which we think fit to grant unto private conversation?

Οὐ γὰρ μόνον τῶν ἀρίστην (πολιτείαν) δεῖ σκοπεῖν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὴν δυνατήν. Arist. *Pol.* 4. 1.

Si ubi jubeantur quærere singulis liceat; pereunte obsequio etiam imperium intercidit. Tac. 1. *p.* 450. Otho.

To what purpose did God institute a Government, if the resolutions thereof must be suspended, till every man is satisfied with them; or if its state must be altered so often as any man can pick in it matter of offence or dislike; or if the proceedings thereof must be shaped according to the numberless varieties of different and repugnant fancies?

Are, I pray, the objections against obedience so clear, and cogent, as are the commands which enjoin, and the reasons which enforce it? are the inconveniences adhering to it apparently so grievous, as are the mischiefs which spring from disobedience? do they in a just balance counterpoise the disparagement of authority, the violation of order, the disturbance of peace, the obstruction of edification, which disobedience produceth?

Dixisti sanè scrupulum tibi esse tollendum de animo, in quem incidisti. Incidisti sed tuâ credulitate irreligiosâ, &c. Cypr. *Ep.* 69. *(ad Florent.) vid. optimè & appositè de hac re differentem.*

Do the *scruples* (or *reasons*, if we will call them so) which we propound, amount to such a strength and evidence, as to outweigh the judgment of those whom God hath authorized by his Commission, whom he doth enable by his grace to instruct and guide us? May not those, whose office it is to judge of such things; whose business it is to study for skill in order to that purpose, who have most experience in those affairs specially belonging to them, be reasonably deemed most able to judge both for themselves and us, what is lawfull, and what expedient? have they not eyes to see what we doe, and hearts to judge concerning the force of our pretences, as well as we?

Qui fidei & veritati præsumus. Cypr. *Ep.* 72.

Is it not a design of their office to resolve our doubts, and void our scruples in such cases, that we may act securely and quietly, being directed by better judgments than our own? Are they not strictly obliged in conscience, are they not deeply engaged by interest to govern us in the best manner? Is it therefore wisedom, is it modesty, is it justice for us to advance our private conceits against their most deliberate publick resolutions?

reſolutions? may we not in ſo doing miſtake; may we not be blind, or weak (not to ſay fond, or proud, or perverſe) and ſhall thoſe defects or defaults of ours evacuate ſo many commands of God, and render his ſo noble, ſo needfull an ordinance quite inſignificant?

Do we eſpecially ſeem to be in earneſt, or appear otherwiſe than illuſively to palliate our naughty affections, and ſiniſter reſpects, when we ground the juſtification of our non-conformity upon dark ſubtilties, and intricate quirks; which it is hard to conceive that we underſtand our ſelves, and whereof very perſpicacious men cannot apprehend the force? Do we think we ſhall be innocent men, becauſe we are ſmart Sophiſters; or that God will excuſe us from our duty, becauſe we can perplex men with our diſcourſes? or that we are bound to doe nothing, becauſe we are able to ſay ſomewhat againſt all things?

Would we not doe well to conſider, what huge danger they incur, and how maſſy a load of guilt they muſt undergo, upon whom ſhall be charged all thoſe ſad diſorders, and horrid miſchiefs, which are naturally conſequent on diſobedience; what if confuſion of things, if corruption of manners, if oppreſſion of truth, if diſſolution of the Church do thence enſue; what a caſe then ſhall we be in, who confer ſo much thereto? would not ſuch conſiderations be apt to beget ſcruples far more diſquieting an honeſt, and truly conſcientious mind, than any ſuch either profound ſubtilties, or ſuperficial plauſibilities can doe; which Diſſenters are wont to alledge? For needeth he not to have extreme reaſon (reaſon extremely ſtrong, and evident) who dareth to refuſe that obedience, which God ſo plainly commandeth, by which his own authority is maintained, on which the ſafety, proſperity, and peace of the Church dependeth, in which the ſupport of Religion, and the welfare of numberleſs ſouls is deeply concerned?

Did, let me farther ask, the *Apoſtles*, when they ſettled orders in the Church, when they impoſed what they conceived needfull for edification, and decency, when they inflicted ſpiritual chaſtiſements upon diſorderly walkers, regard ſuch pretences? or had thoſe ſelf-conceited, and ſelf-willed people (who *obeyed* not their *words*, but *reſiſted* and rejected them) no ſuch pretences? had they nothing, think we, to ſay for themſelves, nothing to object againſt the Apoſtolick orders, and proceedings? they had ſurely; they failed not to find faults in the eſtabliſhment, and to pretend a kind of tender conſcience for their diſobedience; yet this hindred not, but that the Apoſtles condemned their misbehaviour and inflicted ſevere cenſures upon them?

2 Tim. 4. 15. 1 Tim. 1. 20. 2 Theſſ. 3. 14. 6.

Did not alſo the primitive *Biſhops* (and all ſpiritual Governours down from the beginning every-where almoſt to theſe days of contention and diſorder) proceed in the ſame courſe; not fearing to enact ſuch laws concerning indifferent matters, and circumſtances of Religion, as ſeemed to them conducible to the good of the Church? did not all good People readily comply with their orders, how painfull ſoever, or diſagreeable to fleſh and bloud, without conteſt, or ſcruple? yet had not they as much wit, and no leſs conſcience than our ſelves? They who had wiſedom enough to deſcry the truth of our Religion through all the clouds of obloquy and diſgrace, which it lay under; who had zeal and conſtancy to bear the hardeſt brunts of perſecution againſt it; were they ſuch fools as to ſee no fault, ſo ſtupid as to reſent nothing, or ſo looſe as to comply with any thing? No ſurely; they were in truth ſo wiſe as to know their duty, and ſo honeſt as to obſerve it.

If theſe conſiderations will not ſatisfy, I have done; and proceed to the next Point of our duty, to which the precept in our Text may extend; concerning the doctrine of our Guides: In which reſpect it may be conceived to imply the following particulars, to be performed by us, as inſtances, or parts, or degrees thereof.

1. We ſhould readily, and gladly addreſs our ſelves to hear them; not out of profane and wilfull contempt, or ſlothfull negligence declining to attend upon their inſtructions: There were of old thoſe, of whom the *Prophets* complain, who would not ſo much as hearken to the words of thoſe, whom God ſent unto them; but ſtopped their ears, *withdrew the ſhoulder, and hardned the neck, and would not hear*; there were thoſe in the *Evangelical* times, who did ἀπωθεῖν τὸν λόγον, *thruſt away the word of God, judging themſelves unworthy of eternal life; who would not admit, or hear the word of life*, and overtures of grace propounded by the *Apoſtles*; There were *Gadarenes*, who beſeeched our Lord himſelf to depart from their Coaſts; There have always been *deaf Adders, who ſtop their ears to the voice of the Charmer, charm he never ſo wiſely*; No wonder then if now there be thoſe, who will not ſo much as allow a hearing to the Meſſengers of God, and the Guides of their ſoul, ſome out of a factious prejudice againſt their office, or their perſons, or their way to ſhun them, giving themſelves over to the conduct of Seducers; ſome out of a profane neglect of all Religion, out of being wholly poſſeſſed with worldly cares, and deſires, out of ſtupidity and ſloth (indiſpoſing them to mind any thing that is ſerious) will not afford them any regard: All theſe are extremely blameable, offenſive to God, and injurious to themſelves: It is a heinous affront to God (implying an hoſtile diſpoſition toward him, an unwillingneſs to have any correſpondence with him) to refuſe ſo much as audience to his Ambaſſadours; It is an interpretative repulſing him; ſo of old he expreſſed it; *I* (ſaith he) *ſpake unto you, riſing early, and ſpeaking, but ye heard not, I called you, but ye anſwered not*; ſo under the Goſpel, *He* (ſaith our Lord) *that heareth you, heareth me*; and *he that deſpiſeth* (or regardeth not) *you, deſpiſeth me*; and, *We are Ambaſſadours of Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you by us; we pray you in Chriſt's ſtead be reconciled to God.* It is a ſtarving our ſouls, depriving them of that food, which God hath provided for them; It is keeping our ſelves at diſtance from any means or poſſibility of being well informed and quickned to the practice of our duty, of being reclaimed from our errours, and ſins; it is the way to become hardned in impiety, or ſinking into a reprobate ſenſe: This is the firſt ſtep to obedience; for *how can we believe, except we hear?* this is that, which St. *James* urgeth; *Let every man be quick to hear*; and which St. *Peter* thus enjoineth: *Like new-born babes deſire the ſincere milk of the word, that we may grow thereby*; We ſhould eſpecially be quick and ready to hear thoſe, whom God hath authorized and appointed to ſpeak; we ſhould *deſire to ſuck the milk of the word* from thoſe, who are our ſpiritual Parents, and Nurſes.

Neh. 9. 29. Prov. 1. 24. Iſa. 65. 12. 66. 4. Jer. 7. 13. 6. 10. Acts 13. 46. Matt. 10. 14. Luke 8. 37. Pſal. 58. 4, 5. Jer. 7. 13. Luke 10. 16. 2 Cor. 5. 20. Jam. 1. 19. 1 Pet. 2. 2.

2. We ſhould hear them with ſerious, earneſt attention, and conſideration; ſo that we may well underſtand, may be able to weigh, may retain in memory, and may become duely affected with their diſcourſes; We muſt not hear them drowſily and ſlightly, as if we were nothing concerned, or were hearing an impertinent tale; their word ſhould not paſs through the ears, and ſlip away without effect; but ſink into the underſtanding, into the memory, into the heart; like *the good ſeed* falling into *a depth of earth*, able to afford it root, and nouriſhment; therefore

Matt. 13. 5.

fore we must attend diligently thereto: περισσοτέρως ἐν δεῖ προσέχειν, *we should therefore give more abundant heed* (as the *Apostle* saith) *to the things we hear, lest at any time we should let them slip.* This duty the nature and importance of their word requireth: *It is the word not of men,* but *in truth the word* of the great *God,* (his word as proceeding from him, as declaring his mind and will, as tendring his overtures of grace and mercy) which as such challengeth great regard and awe; it informeth us of our chief duties, it furthereth our main interests, it guideth us into, it urgeth us forward in the way to eternal happiness; 'tis the word that is *able to save our souls;* to *render us wise unto salvation;* It therefore claimeth, and deserveth from us most earnest attention; it is a great indignity and folly not to yield it.

Heb. 2. 1. 1 Thess. 2. 13. Jam. 1. 21.

3. We should to their instructions bring good dispositions of mind, such as may render them most effectual and fruitfull to us; Such as are right intention, candour, docility, meekness.

We should not be induced to hear them out of curiosity, (as *having itching ears*) being desirous to hear *some new things,* some fine notions, some taking discourse; somewhat to fansie or talk pleasantly about; (as the *Athenians* heard St. *Paul,* not out of censoriousness, or inclination to criticize, and find fault (as the *Pharisees* heard our Saviour, *Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him*) not out of design to gratify our passions in hearing them, to reprove other persons; or for any such corrupt and sinister intention, but altogether out of pure design that we may be improved in knowledge, and excited to the practice of our duty.

Acts 17. 21. Luke 11. 54.

We should not come to hear them with minds imbued with ill prejudices, and partial affections, which may obstruct the virtue and efficacy of their discourse; or may hinder us from judging fairly, and truly about what they say; but with such freedom and ingenuity as may dispose us readily to yield unto, and acquiesce in any profitable truth declared by them; like the generous *Beræans,* who *received the word* μετὰ πάσης προθυμίας, *with all* alacrity and *readiness of mind, searching the scriptures daily whether these things were so;* ὡς ἀρτιγέννητα βρέφη, *like infants newly born,* that come to the dugg without any other inclination than to suck what is needfull for their sustenance.

Acts 17. 11. 1 Pet. 2. 2.

We should be docile, and tractable; willing and apt to learn; shaking off all those indispositions of soul (all dulness, and sluggishness, all peevishness and perverseness, all pride and self-conceitedness, all corrupt affection and indulgence, to our conceits, our humours, our passions, our lusts, and inordinate desires) which may obstruct our understanding of the Word, our yielding assent to it, our receiving impression from it: There were those, concerning whom the *Apostle* said, that he could not proceed in his discourse, because they were νωθροὶ ταῖς ἀκοαῖς, *dull of hearing* (or sluggish in hearing,) who were indisposed to hear, and uncapable to understand, because they would not be at the pains to rouse up their fancies, and fix their minds upon a serious consideration of things: there were those, who had *a spirit of slumber, eyes not to see, and ears not to hear;* who *did hear with the ear, but not understand; seeing did see, but not perceive; for their heart had waxed gross, their ears were dull of hearing; and their eyes were closed;* Such indocile persons there always have been, who being stupified and perverted by corrupt affections became uncapable of bettering from good instruction: All such we should strive to free our selves from; that we may perform this duty to our Guides, and *In meekness receive the engrafted word.*

Heb. 5. 11. (1 Cor. 3. 2.) Isa. 29. 10. Rom. 11. 8. Isa. 6. 9. Acts 28. 26. John 12. 40. Jam. 1. 21.

Theſe practices (of hearing, of attending, of coming well diſpoſed to inſtruction) are at leaſt ſteps and degrees neceſſarily prerequiſite to the obedience preſcribed; and farther to preſs them all together upon us, we may conſider, that it is ſtrictly incumbent on them (under danger of heavy puniſhment and *woe*) *willingly*, earneſtly, with all diligence and patience to *labour* in teaching and admoniſhing us; they muſt *give attendance*, and *take heed unto their doctrine*, that it may be *ſound* and profitable; they *muſt preach the word*, and *be inſtant* upon it *in ſeaſon, out of ſeaſon* (that is not onely taking, but ſeeking and ſnatching all occaſions to doe it) *reproving, rebuking, exhorting with all long-ſuffering, and doctrine*; they *muſt warn every man, and teach every man in all wiſedom, that they may preſent every man perfect in Chriſt Jeſus*: as they are obliged in ſuch manner to doe theſe things, ſo there muſt be correſpondent duties lying upon us, to receive their doctrine readily, carefully, patiently, ſincerely and fairly: As they muſt be faithfull diſpenſers of God's heavenly truth, and holy myſteries, ſo we muſt be obſequious entertainers of them: impoſing ſuch commands on them doth imply reciprocal obligations in their hearers and ſcholars; otherwiſe their office would be vain, and their endeavours fruitleſs; God no leſs would be fruſtrated in his deſign, than we ſhould be deprived of the advantages of their inſtitution.

1 Cor. 9. 16. 2 Cor. 5. 14. 1 Pet. 5. 2. Rom. 12. 3. 1 Tim. 5. 17. 1 Tim. 4. 13, 16. 2 Tim. 4. 2. Col. 1. 28. 1 Cor. 4. 2.

But farther, it is a more immediate ingredient of this duty, that,

4. We ſhould effectually be enlightned by their doctrine, be convinced by their arguments perſuading truth and duty, be moved by their admonitions, and exhortations to good practice: We ſhould open our eyes to the light, which they ſhed forth upon us; we ſhould ſurrender our judgment to the proofs, which they alledge; we ſhould yield our hearts and affections pliable to their mollifying, and warming diſcourſes: It is their part to ſubdue our minds to *the obedience of faith*, and to ſubject our wills to the obſervance of God's Commandments (*Caſting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth it ſelf againſt the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Chriſt.*) It muſt therefore anſwerably be our duty not to reſiſt, not to hold out, not to perſiſt obſtinate in our errours, or prejudices; to ſubmit our minds to the power of truth, being willingly, and gladly conquered by it; it muſt be our duty to ſubjugate our wills, to bend our inclinations, to form our affections to a free compliance of heart with the duties urged upon us; we ſhould not be like thoſe *Diſciples*, of whom our Lord complaineth thus: *O fools, and ſlow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have ſpoken*; nor like the *Jews*, with whom St. *Stephen* thus expoſtulates: *Ye ſtiff-necked, and uncircumciſed in heart and ears, ye do always reſiſt the Holy Ghoſt.* They ſhould ſpeak with power, and efficacy; we therefore ſhould not by our indiſpoſitions (by obſtinacy of conceit, or hardneſs of heart) obſtruct their endeavours; they ſhould be *co-workers of your joy* (that is, working in us that faith and thoſe vertues, which are productive of true joy and comfort to us) we therefore ſhould co-work with them toward the ſame end; they ſhould edify us in knowledge, and holineſs; we ſhould therefore yield our ſelves to be faſhioned, and poliſhed by them.

2 Cor. 10. 5. Luke 24. 25. Acts 7. 51. 1 Cor. 4. 20. 2. 4. 2 Cor. 1. 24. 1 Cor. 3. 5.

5. We ſhould, in fine, obey their doctrine by conforming our practice thereto; this our Lord preſcribed in regard even to the *Jewiſh* Guides and Doctours; *The Scribes and Phariſees ſit in Moſes his ſeat; all therefore whatſoever they bid you obſerve, that obſerve and doe*; the ſame we may well conceive that he requireth in reſpect to his own Miniſters, the teachers of a better Law, authorized to direct us by his own Commiſ-

Matt. 23. 3.

ſion,

ſion, and thereto more ſpecially qualified by his grace: this is indeed the Crown and completion of all; to hear ſignifieth nothing; to be convinced in our mind, and to be affected in our heart will but aggravate our guilt, if we neglect practice: Every Sermon we hear, that ſheweth us our duty, will in effect be an enditement upon us, will ground a ſentence of condemnation, if we tranſgreſs it: for, as *The Earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dreſſed, receiveth bleſſing from God, ſo that which beareth thorns and briers, is rejected, and is nigh unto curſing, and its end is to be burned:* and, *Not the hearers of the law are juſt with God, but the doers of the law ſhall be juſtified.* And it is a good advice, that of St. *James*; *Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers onely, deceiving your own ſelves*; 'tis, he intimateth, a fallacy ſome are apt to put upon themſelves to conceit they have done ſufficiently, when they have lent an ear to the word; this is the leaſt part to be done in regard to it, practice is all in all; what is it to be ſhewed the way, and to know it exactly, if we do not walk in it, if we do not by it arrive to our journey's end, the ſalvation of our ſouls? To have waited upon our Lord himſelf, and hung upon his diſcourſe, was not available; for when in the day of accompt, ſome ſhall begin to allege, *We have eaten, and drank before thee, and thou haſt taught in our ſtreets*; *Our Lord will ſay, I know you knot, whence ye are, depart from me all ye workers of iniquity.* And, it is our Lord's declaration in the caſe, *Whoſoever heareth theſe ſayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wiſe man, which built his houſe upon a rock; but every one that heareth theſe ſayings of mine, and doeth them not, ſhall be likened unto a fooliſh man, that built his houſe upon the ſand.*

Heb. 6. 7, 8. 10. 26. Rom. 2. 13. Jam. 1. 22. Luke 13. 26, 27. Matt. 7. 21. (Joh. 14. 21.)

Many are very earneſt to hear, they *hear gladly*, as *Herod* did Saint *John Baptiſt*'s homilies; they *receive the word with joy*, as the *temporary believers* in the Parable did; They doe, as thoſe men did in the *Prophet*, *delight to know God's ways, do ask of God the ordinances of juſtice, do take delight in approaching God*; Or as thoſe in another *Prophet*; *Who ſpeak one to another, every one to his brother, ſaying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the Lord*; *And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they ſit before thee as my people; and they hear thy words, but will not doe them; for with their mouth they ſhew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetouſneſs: And lo thou art to them as a very lovely ſong of one that hath a pleaſant voice, and can play well on an inſtrument; for they hear thy words, but they doe them not:* They for a time *rejoice in the light of God's* Meſſengers, as thoſe *Jews* did in the light of that *burning and ſhining lamp*, St. *John* the *Baptiſt*; but all comes to nothing; but they are backward and careleſs to perform, at leaſt more than they pleaſe themſelves, or what ſuteth to their fancy, their humour, their appetite, their intereſt: Many hearers will believe onely what they like, or what ſuteth to their prejudices and paſſions; many of what they believe will practiſe that onely which ſorteth with their temper, or will ſerve their deſigns; they cannot conform to unpleaſant, and unprofitable Doctrines: Sometimes care choaketh the word, ſometimes temptation of pleaſure, of profit, of honour allureth, ſometimes difficulties, hazards, perſecutions diſcourage from obedience to it:

Mark 6. 20. Matt. 13. 20. Iſa. 58. 2. Ezek. 33. 31, 32. John 5. 35.

Theſe particulars are obvious, and by moſt will be conſented to; there is one point which perhaps will more hardly be admitted, which therefore I ſhall more largely inſiſt upon: 'tis this,

6. That

6. That as in all caſes it is our duty to deſer much regard to the opinion of our Guides, ſo in ſome caſes it behoveth us to rely barely upon their judgment and advice; thoſe eſpecially among them who excell in dignity, and worth; who are approved for wiſedom and integrity; their definitions, or the declarations of their opinion, (eſpecially ſuch as are exhibited upon mature deliberation and debate, in a ſolemn manner) are ever very probable arguments of truth and expediency; they are commonly the beſt arguments which can be had in ſome matters, eſpecially to the meaner and ſimpler ſort of people. This upon many accompts will appear reaſonable.

It is evident to experience, that every man is not capable to judge, or able to guide himſelf in matters of this nature (concerning divine truth and conſcience.) There are *children in underſtanding*, there are men *weak in faith* (or knowledge concerning the faith,) there are *idiots*, ἄχαιοι (men not bad, but *ſimple*) perſons *occupying the room of the unlearned, unskilfull in the word of righteouſneſs*, who (as the *Apoſtle* ſaith) *need that one ſhould teach them which be the firſt principles of the oracles of God.*

Rom. 14. 1. 15. 1, &c. Rom. 16. 18. 2 Cor. 14. 16. 3. 2. 8. 10.

Vulgo non judicium, non veritas. Tac.

The vulgar ſort of men are as undiſcerning and injudicious in all things, ſo peculiarly in matters of this nature, ſo much abſtracted from common ſenſe and experience; whence we ſee them eaſily ſeduced into the fondeſt conceits and wildeſt courſes by any ſlender artifice, or fair pretence; *like children toſſed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the ſlight of men, and cunning craftineſs, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.*

Ἄκεπτον ὁ δῆμος, M. Ant. Eph. 4. 14.

'Αλλ' εἰδέτις ἐτέρως βέλτιον τὰς ἑαυτῶν ψυχὰς ἐκδιδόναι τεχνικωτέρως, ἢ ἄλλων ψυχὰς ἢ ἀνεπιστήμονας, καὶ ἀκολω' ἐκπηδᾶν μᾶλλον ἐυγνάμονα, ἢ γλῶτταν κινεῖν ἀπαίδευτον. Naz. Or. 1. ——*fide calidus, & virtute robuſtus, &c.* Cypr. *Ep.* 23. *de* Luciano.

There are alſo ſome particular caſes, a competent information and skill in which muſt depend upon improvements of mind acquired by more than ordinary ſtudy and experience: ſo that in them moſt people do want ſufficient means of attaining knowledge requiſite to guide their judgment, or their practice: And for ſuch perſons in ſuch caſes it is plainly the beſt, the wiſeſt, aud the ſafeſt way to rely upon the direction of their Guides, aſſenting to what they declare, acting what they preſcribe, going whither they conduct.

The very notion of Guides, and the deſign of their office doth import a difference of knowledge, and a need of reliance upon them in ſuch caſes; it ſignifieth, that we are in ſome meaſure ignorant of the way, and that they better know it; and if ſo, plain reaſon dictateth it fit that we ſhould follow them; and indeed what need were there of Guides, to what purpoſe ſhould we have them, if we can ſufficiently ken the way, and judge what we ſhould doe, without them?

In the ſtate of learning (in which the aſſigning us Teachers ſuppoſeth us placed) whatever our capacity may be, yet our judgment at leaſt (for want of a full comprehenſion of things, which muſt be diſcovered in order, and by degrees) is imperfect; in that ſtate therefore it becometh us not to pretend exerciſe of judgment, but rather eaſily to yield aſſent to what our Teachers, who ſee farther into the thing, do aſſert; *The learner* (as *Seneca* ſaith) *is bound to be ruled, while he beginneth to be able to rule himſelf.*

Regi debet, dum incipit ſe poſſe regere. Sen. *Ep.* 94.

Δεῖ μανθάνοντα πιστεύειν, *A learner ſhould in ſome meaſure be credulous*; otherwiſe as he will often fail in his judgment, ſo he will make little progreſs in learning; for, if he will admit nothing on his Maſter's word, if he will queſtion all things, if he will continually be doubting and diſputing,

ting, or contradicting and oppoſing his Teacher, how can inſtruction proceed? He that preſently will be his own Maſter, is a bad Scholar, and will be a worſe Maſter. He that will fly before he is fledged, no wonder if he tumble down.

There are divers obvious, and very conſiderable caſes, in which perſons moſt contemptuous of authority, and refractary toward their Guides, are conſtrained to rely upon the judgment of others, and are contented to doe it, their conſcience ſhewing them unable to judge for themſelves; In admitting the literal ſenſe of Scripture, according to tranſlations; in the interpretation of difficult places, depending upon the skill of languages, grammar, and criticiſm, upon the knowledge of humane arts and ſciences, upon hiſtories and ancient cuſtoms; in ſuch caſes all illiterate perſons (however otherwiſe diffident, and diſregardfull of authority) are forced to ſee with the eyes of other men, to ſubmit their judgment to the skill and fidelity of their learned Guides, taking the very principles and foundations of their Religion upon truſt; And why then conſonantly may they not doe it in other caſes; eſpecially in the reſolution of difficult, ſublime, obſcure, and ſubtile points, the comprehenſion whereof tranſcendeth their capacity?

SERMON XXVII.

Of Obedience to our Spiritual Guides and Governours.

HEB. XIII. 17.

Obey them that have the rule over you.

BUT farther,

The more to engage and incline us to the performing this part of our duty (the regarding, prizing, confiding in the judgment of our Guides) we may conſider the great advantages, both natural and ſupernatural, which they have to qualify them in order to ſuch purpoſes.

1. They may reaſonably be preſumed more intelligent and skilfull in divine matters, than others; for as they have the ſame natural capacities and endowments with others (or rather commonly ſomewhat better than others, as being deſigned and ſelected to this ſort of employment) ſo their natural abilities are by all poſſible means improved: it is their trade and faculty, unto which their education is directed: in acquiring ability

ability toward which they ſpend their time, their care, their pains; in which
Heb. 5. 14. they are continually verſed and exerciſed (*having*, as the *Apoſtle* ſpeaketh, *by reaſon of uſe their ſenſes exerciſed to diſcern both good and evil*) for which alſo they employ their ſupplications, and devotions to God.

Many ſpecial advantages they hence procure, needfull or very conducible to a more perfect knowledge of ſuch matters, and to ſecurity from errours; ſuch as are converſing with ſtudies, which enlarge a man's mind, and improve his judgment; a skill of diſquiſition about things, of ſifting and canvaſing points coming under debate; of weighing the force of arguments, and diſtinguiſhing the colours of things; the knowledge of languages, in which the *divine Oracles* are expreſſed, of Sciences, of Hiſtories, of practices ſerving to the diſcovery and illuſtration of the truth: exerciſe in meditation, reading, writing, ſpeaking, diſputing and conference, whereby the mind is greatly enlightned, and the reaſon ſtrengthned; acquaintance with variety of learned Authours, who with great diligence have expounded the Holy Scriptures, and with moſt accuracy diſcuſſed points of doctrine; eſpecially with *Ancient writers*, who living near the *Apoſtolical* times, and being immediately, (or within few degrees mediately) their Diſciples may juſtly be ſuppoſed moſt helpfull toward informing us what was their genuine doctrine, what the true ſenſe of their writings: By ſuch means as in other *Faculties*, ſo in this of *Theology*, a competent skill may be obtained; there is no other ordinary, or probable way; and no extraordinary way can be truſted, now that men appear not to grow learned or wiſe by ſpecial inſpiration or miracle; after that all pretences to ſuch by-ways have been detected of impoſture, and do ſmell too rank of hypocriſie.

Since then our Guides are ſo advantageouſly qualified to direct us; it is in matters difficult, and doubtfull (the which require good meaſure of skill and judgment to determine about them) moſt reaſonable, that we ſhould rely upon their authority, preferring it in ſuch caſes to our private diſcretion; taking it for more probable, that they ſhould comprehend the truth, than we (unaſſiſted by them, and judging merely by our own glimmering light) can do; deeming it good odds on the ſide of their doctrine againſt our opinion, or conjecture.

They have alſo another peculiar advantage toward judging ſincerely of things, by their greater retirement from the World and diſengagement from ſecular intereſts; the which ordinarily do deprave the underſtandings,
2 Tim. 2. 4. and pervert the judgments of men; diſpoſing them to accommodate their conceits to the *maximes* of worldly policy, or to the vulgar apprehenſions of men: many of which are falſe, and baſe; by ſuch abſtraction of mind from worldly affairs together with faſtning their meditation on the beſt things (which their calling neceſſarily doth put them upon) more than is uſual to other men, they commonly get principles and habits of ſimplicity and integrity, which qualifie men both to diſcern truth better, and more faithfully to declare it.

Seeing then in every *Faculty* the advice of the skilfull is to be regarded, and is uſually relied upon; and in other affairs of greateſt importance we ſcruple not to proceed ſo; ſeeing we commit our life and health (which are moſt pretious to us) to the *Phyſician*, obſerving his preſcriptions commonly without any reaſon, ſometimes againſt our own ſenſe; we entruſt our eſtate, which is ſo dear, with the *Lawyer*, not conteſting his advice; we put our goods and ſafety into the hands of a *Pilot*, ſleeping ſecurely, whilſt he ſteereth us, as he thinketh fit; ſeeing

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in many ſuch occaſions of common life we adviſedly do renounce, or wave our own opinions, abſolutely yielding to the direction of others, taking their authority for a better argument or ground of action, than any which our conceit, or a bare conſideration of the matter can ſuggeſt to us; admitting this *maxime* for good, that it is a more adviſable and ſafe courſe in matters of conſequence to follow the judgment of wiſer men, than to adhere to our own apprehenſions: Seeing it is not wiſedom (as every man thinks) in a doubtfull caſe to act upon diſadvantage, or to venture upon odds againſt himſelf, and it is plainly doing thus to act upon our own opinion againſt the judgment of thoſe who are more improved in the way, or better ſtudied in the point than our ſelves; ſeeing in other caſes theſe are the common and approved apprehenſions and practices; and ſeeing in this caſe there is plainly the ſame reaſon, for that there are difficulties and intricacies in this no leſs than in other Faculties, which need good skill to reſolve them; for that in theſe matters we may eaſily ſlip, and by errour may incur huge danger and damage; why then ſhould we not here take the ſame courſe, following (when no other clearer light, or prevalent reaſon occurreth) the conduct and advice of our more skilfull Guides? eſpecially conſidering, that beſide ordinary, natural and acquired advantages, they have other ſupernatural both obligations to the well diſcharging this duty, and aſſiſtences toward it: For,

Ὃν ἂν ἡγήσωνται περὶ τὰ συμφέροντα ἑαυτοῖς φρονιμώτερον ἑαυτοῦ εἶναι, τούτῳ ἀνδρὶ πειθαρχεῖν. Xen. *Mem. l.* 1.

Ἐν μὲν τῷ πλεῖν πείθεσθαι δεῖ τῷ κυβερνήτῃ, ἐν δὲ τῷ ζῆν τῷ λογίζεσθαι δυναμένῳ βέλτιον. Ariſtonymus *apud* Stob. *Tom.* 2. *Tit.* 3.

2. We may conſider, that they are by God appointed, and impowred to inſtruct and guide us: it is their ſpecial office, not aſſumed by themſelves, or conſtituted by humane prudence, but ordained and ſetled by divine wiſedom for our edification in knowledge, and direction in practice: they are God's meſſengers purpoſely ſent by him, ſelected and *ſeparated* by his inſtinct *for this work*; they are by him *given for the perfecting of the Saints, and edifying the body of Chriſt*: It is by God's warrant, and in his name that they ſpeak, which giveth eſpecial weight to their words, and no mean ground of aſſurance to us in relying upon them: for who is more likely to know God's mind and will, who may be preſumed more faithfull in declaring them, than God's own Officers, and Agents? thoſe whoſe great duty, whoſe main concernment it is to ſpeak not their own ſenſe, but the word of God? They are God's mouth, by whom alone ordinarily he expreſſeth his mind and pleaſure; by whom *he entreateth us to be reconciled* in heart and practice to him; what they ſay therefore is to be received as God's word, except plain reaſon upon due examination do forbid.

Jer. 3. 15. *I will give you Paſtours according to mine heart, which ſhall feed you with knowledge and underſtanding.* Cypr. *Ep.* 55.

Rom. 10. 15. Acts 13. 2. Eph. 4. 11, 12. 1 Cor. 12. 28. 1 Tim. 1. 11, 12. 2. 7. Tit. 1. 3. 1 Theſſ. 2. 4.

2 Cor. 5. 20.

If they by office are Teachers, or Maſters in doctrine, then we anſwerably muſt in obligation be Diſciples, which implies admitting their doctrine, and proficiency in knowledge thereby; If they are appointed Shepherds, then muſt we be their Sheep, to be led and fed by them; if they are God's meſſengers, we muſt yield ſome credence, and embrace the meſſage uttered by them; ſo the *Prophet* telleth us: *The Prieſt's lips ſhould keep knowledge, and they ſhould ſeek the law at his mouth, for he is the meſſenger of the Lord of hoſts*; ſo the Law of old enjoined; ----*According to the ſentence of the law, which they ſhall teach thee, and according to the judgment, which they ſhall tell thee, thou ſhalt doe; thou ſhalt not decline from the ſentence which they ſhall ſhew thee to the right hand, nor to the left*; ſo our *Lord* alſo in regard to the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* ſaith, *The*

Mal. 2. 7.

Deut. 17. 11.

Matt. 23. 3. *Scribes and Phariſees ſit in Moſes his chair, all therefore whatſoever they bid you obſerve, that obſerve and doe*; upon accompt of their office, whatever (Ezek. 34. 16.) they direct to (not repugnant to the divine Law) was to be obſerved by the people; and ſurely in doubtfull caſes, when upon competent inquiry no clear light offereth it ſelf, it cannot be very dangerous to follow their guidance, whom God hath appointed and authorized to lead us; if we err doing ſo, we err wiſely in the way of our duty, and ſo no great blame will attend our errour.

3. We may conſider that our Guides as ſuch have ſpecial aſſiſtence from God; to every vocation God's aid is congruouſly afforded; but to this (the principal of all others, the moſt important, moſt nearly related to God, and moſt peculiarly tending to his ſervice) it is in a ſpecial manner moſt aſſuredly and plentifully imparted.

1 Pet. 4. 10. They are *ſtewards of God's various grace*; and they who diſpence grace
1 Cor. 3. 9. to others cannot want it themſelves; they are *co-operatours with God*, and God conſequently doth co-operate with them; It is *God* who doth ἱκανοῦν,
2 Cor. 3. 5. *render them ſufficient to be Miniſters of the New Teſtament*; and they *mini-*
Phil. 2. 13. *ſter of the ability which God ſupplieth*; Every ſpiritual labourer is obliged
1 Pet. 4. 11. to ſay with St. *Paul*; *By the grace of God I am what I am---I have labou-*
1 Cor. 15. 10. *red, yet not I, but the grace of God, which was with me.*

Eph. 4. 11, 12. God's having *given them* (as St. *Paul* ſaith) to the Church, doth imply
1 Cor. 12. 28. that God hath endowed them with ſpecial ability, and furthereth them (in their conſcionable diſcharge of their miniſtery) with aid requiſite to the deſigns of *perfecting the Saints, and edifying the Body* in knowledge, in vertue, in piety.

As the Holy Ghoſt doth conſtitute them in their charge (according to
Acts 20. 28. that of St. *Paul* in the *Acts*; *Take heed unto your ſelves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghoſt hath made you overſeers*) ſo queſtionleſs he doth
1 Tim. 4. 14. enable and aſſiſt them in adminiſtring their function. There is *a gift* (of
2 Tim. 1. 6. ſpiritual ability, and divine ſuccour) imparted by their conſecration to this office, with *the laying on the hands of the Presbytery*, joined with humble ſupplications for them, and ſolemn benedictions in God's name upon them. The divine Spirit, which *diſtributeth, as he ſeeth good, unto every member of the Church* needfull ſupplies of grace doth *beſtow* on them in
1 Cor. 12. 7, &c. competent meaſure *the word of wiſedom*, and the *word of knowledge* requi-
Eph. 4. 16. ſite for their employment.
Rom. 12. 5, 6. God of old did in extraordinary ways viſibly communicate his Spirit unto his *Prophets* and Agents; the ſame he did liberally pour out upon the *Apoſtles*, and firſt Planters of the *Goſpel*; The ſame queſtionleſs he hath not withdrawn from thoſe, who under the *Evangelical* diſpenſation which
2 Cor. 3. 8. is peculiarly the *miniſtration of the Spirit*, unto which the aid of God's Spirit is moſt proper and moſt needfull) do ſtill by a ſetled miniſtery ſupply the room of thoſe extraordinary Miniſters; but imparteth it to them, in a way although more ordinary and occult, yet no leſs real and effectual, according to proportions anſwerable to the exigencies of need and occaſion; And by the influence hereof upon the Paſtours of his
Matt. 28. 20. Church it is, that our Lord accompliſheth his promiſe to be *with it untill the end of the World.*

Luke 7. 52. *Clavis ſcientiæ, the key of knowledge* ſpiritual, is one of thoſe keys, which he hath given to them, whereby they are enabled to open the Kingdom of Heaven.

Great reaſon therefore we have to place an eſpecial confidence in their direction; for whom can we more ſafely follow, than thoſe, whom (upon

on ſuch grounds of divine declarations and promiſes) we may hope that God doth guide; ſo that conſequently in following them we do in effect follow God himſelf? *He that heareth you, heareth me*, might be ſaid not onely becauſe of their relation unto Chriſt; but becauſe their word proceedeth from his inſpiration, being no other than his mind conveyed through their mouth.

4. We may alſo for our encouragement to confide in our Guides conſider, that they are themſelves deeply concerned in our being rightly guided; their preſent comfort, their ſalvation hereafter depending upon the faithfull, and carefull diſcharge of their duty herein: they muſt render an accompt for it; ſo that if by their wilfull, or negligent miſcarriage we do fall into dangerous errour or ſin, they do thence not onely forfeit rich and glorious rewards (aſſigned to thoſe, *who turn many unto righteouſneſs*) but incur wofull puniſhment; this doth aſſure their integrity, and render our confidence in them very reaſonable; for as we may ſafely truſt a Pilot, who hath no leſs intereſt than our ſelves in the ſafe conveyance of the veſſel to port; ſo may we reaſonably confide in their advice, whoſe ſalvation is adventured with ours in the ſame bottom, or rather is wrapped up, and carried in ours; It is not probable they will (at leaſt deſignedly) miſguide us to their own extreme damage, to their utter ruine: *If they do not warn the wicked from his wicked way to ſave his life*, Ezek. 3. 18. *God hath ſaid that he will require his bloud at their hands*; and is it likely 33. 2, 8. they ſhould wittingly run ſuch a hazard, that they ſhould purpoſely caſt away the ſouls, for which they are ſo certainly accomptable? it is our *Apoſtle*'s enforcement of the precept in our *Text*; *Obey them that guide you; for they watch for your ſouls, as they that muſt give an accompt*; which argumentation is not onely grounded upon the obligations of ingenuity and gratitude, but alſo upon conſiderations of diſcretion and intereſts; we ſhould obey our Guides in equity and honeſty; we may doe it adviſedly, becauſe they in regard to their own accompts at the final judgment are obliged to be carefull for the good of our ſouls.

Upon theſe conſiderations it is plainly reaſonable to follow our Guides in all matters, wherein we have no other very clear and certain light of reaſon, or revelation to conduct us: the doing ſo is indeed (which is farther obſervable) not onely wiſe in it ſelf, but ſafe in way of prevention, that we be not ſeduced by other treacherous Guides; it will not onely ſecure us from our own weak judgments, but from the frauds of thoſe *who lie in wait to deceive*. The ſimpler ſort of men will in effect Eph. 4. 14. be always led not by their own judgment, but by the authority of others; and if they be not fairly guided by thoſe whom God hath conſtituted and aſſigned to that end, they will be led by the noſe by thoſe who are concerned to ſeduce them: ſo reaſon dictateth that it muſt be, ſo experience ſheweth it ever to have been; that the people, whenever they have deſerted their true Guides, have ſoon been hurried by Impoſtors into moſt dangerous errours, and extravagant follies; being *carried about with divers*, Heb. 13. 9. *and ſtrange doctrines*; being *like children toſſed to and fro with every wind* Eph. 4. 14. *of doctrine*.

It is therefore a great advantage to us, and a great mercy of God, that there are (by God's care) provided for us ſuch helps, upon which we may commonly for our guidance in the way to happineſs more ſafely rely, than upon our own judgments lyable to miſtake, and then upon the counſel of others, who may be intereſted to abuſe us; very fooliſh and very ingratefull we are, if we do not highly prize, if we do not willingly embrace this advantage.

I farther add, that as wiſedom may induce, ſo modeſty and humility ſhould diſpoſe us to follow the direction of our Guides: *Ye Younger* (ſaith St. *Peter*) *ſubmit your ſelves unto the Elder* (that is, ye Inferiours to your Superiours, ye that are the Flock to your Paſtours) *and* (ſubjoineth he immediately) *be cloathed with humility*; ſignifying, that it is a point of humility to yield that ſubmiſſion; Every modeſt, and humble perſon is apt to diſtruſt his own, and to ſubmit to better judgments: And, *Not to lean to our underſtanding, not to be wiſe in our own eyes; not to ſeem to know any thing*, not *to ſeem any body to ones ſelf, in humility to prefer others before our ſelves*, are divine injunctions, chiefly applicable to this caſe, in reference to our ſpiritual Guides; for if it be pride or culpable immodeſty to preſume our ſelves wiſer than any man, what is it then to prefer our ſelves in that reſpect before our teachers; as indeed we do, when without evident reaſon we diſregard, or diſſent from their opinion?

1 Pet. 5. 5.

Prov. 3. 5, 7. Rom. 12. 6, 10. Gal. 6. 3. Phil. 2. 3. 1 Cor. 8. 2. 1 Tim. 6. 6.

It is then a duty very reaſonable, and a very commendable practice to rely upon the guidance of our Paſtours in ſuch caſes, wherein ſurer direction faileth, and we cannot otherwiſe fully ſatisfie our ſelves.

Neither in doing ſo (againſt ſome appearances of reaſon, or with ſome violence to our private conceits) do we act againſt our conſcience, but rather truely according to it; for conſcience (as the word in this caſe is uſed) is nothing elſe but an opinion in practical matters grounded upon the beſt reaſon we can diſcern; if therefore in any caſe the authority of our Guides be a reaſon outweighing all other reaſons apparent, he that in ſuch a caſe, notwithſtanding other arguments leſs forcible, doth conform his judgment and practice thereto, therein exactly followeth conſcience; yea, in doing otherwiſe, he would thwart and violence his own conſcience, and be ſelf-condemned, adhering to a leſs probable reaſon in oppoſition to one more probable.

I do not hereby mean to aſſert, that we are obliged indifferently (with an implicit faith or blind obedience) to believe all that our teachers ſay, or to practiſe all they bid us: for they are men, and therefore ſubject to error, and ſin; they may neglect or abuſe the advantages they have of knowing better than others; they may ſometimes by infirmity, by negligence, by pravity fail in performing faithfully their duty toward us: they may be ſwayed by temper, be led by paſſion, be corrupted by ambition or avarice, ſo as thence to embrace and vent bad doctrines: We do ſee our Paſtours often diſſenting and claſhing among themſelves, ſometimes with themſelves, ſo as to change and retract their own opinions.

Iſa. 3. 12. *O my people, they which lead thee, cauſe thee to err, and deſtroy the way of thy paths.*

(Jer. 2. 8.) Iſa. 28. 7. Jer. 10. 21. 12. 10. Jer. 23. 11. (Jer. 18. 18. 5. 31. 6. 13) Zeph. 3. 4.

We find the *Prophets* of old complaining of *Prieſts*, of *Paſtours*, of *Elders* and Prophets, who *handled the law, yet were ignorant of God*; who *erred in viſion, and ſtumbled in judgment*; who *were profane, brutiſh, light and treacherous perſons; who polluted the ſanctuary, and did violence to the Law; and profaned holy things*; who *handled the law, yet knew not God*; from *whom the Law, and counſel did periſh*; *who taught for hire, and divined for money; who themſelves departed out of the way, and cauſed many to ſtumble, and corrupted the covenant of Levi*; *who deſtroyed and ſcattered the ſheep of God's paſture.*

Ezek. 22. 26. Mal. 1. 6. Ezek. 7. 26. Mic. 3. 11. Mal. 2. 8, 9. Jer. 23. 11. 12. 10.

There were in our *Saviour's* time Guides, *of the ferment of whoſe doctrine* good people were *bid to beware*; who *tranſgreſſed and defeated the commandment of God by their traditions*; who *did take away the key of knowledge,*

Matt. 16. 6, 12. Luke 12. 1. Matt. 15. 2, 6.

ledge, ſo that they would not enter themſelves into the Kingdom of Heaven, nor would ſuffer others to enter; blind guides, who both themſelves did fall, and drew others into the ditch of noxious errour, and wicked practice: the followers of which Guides did *in vain worſhip God, obſerving for doctrine the precepts of men.* Luke 11. 52. Matt. 15. 14. Matt. 15. 9.

There have not ſince the primitive times of the Goſpel wanted thoſe who (indulging to ambition, avarice, curioſity, faction, and other bad affections) have depraved and debaſed religion with noxious errours, and idle ſuperſtitions; ſuch as St. *Bernard* deſcribeth, *&c.* *Vid. Apol. Eccl. Ang.*

We are in matters of ſuch infinite concernment to our eternal welfare, in wiſedom and duty obliged not wholly without farther heed or care to truſt the diligence, and integrity of others, but to conſider and look about us, uſing our own reaſon, judgment and diſcretion, ſo far as we are capable; we cannot in ſuch a caſe be blamed for too much circumſpection and caution.

We are not wholly blind, not void of reaſon, not deſtitute of fit helps; in many caſes we have competent ability to judge, and means ſufficient to attain knowledge; we are therefore concerned to uſe our eyes, to employ our reaſon, to embrace and improve the advantages vouchſafed us.

We are accomptable perſonally for all our actions as agreeable or croſs to reaſon; if we are miſtaken by our own default, or miſled by the ill guidance of others, we ſhall however deeply ſuffer for it, and *die in our iniquity*; the ignorance, or errour of our Guides will not wholly excuſe us from guilt, or exempt us from puniſhment; it is fit therefore that we ſhould be allowed, as to the ſum of the matter, to judge and chuſe for our ſelves: for if our ſalvation were wholly placed in the hands of others, ſo that we could not but in caſe of their errour or default miſcarry; our ruine would be inevitable, and conſequently not juſt; we ſhould periſh without blame, if we were bound, as a blind and brutiſh herd, to follow others. Ezek. 3. 18.

We, in order to our practice, (which muſt be regulated by faith and knowledge) and toward preparing our ſelves for our grand accompt, are obliged to get a knowledge and perſuaſion concerning our duty; *to prove* (or ſearch, and examine) *what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God*; for ignorance (if anywiſe by our endeavour vincible) will not ſecure us: *He that* (ſaith our *Lord* and *Judge*) *knew not, and did commit things worthy of ſtripes, ſhall be beaten with few ſtripes* (few; not in themſelves, but comparatively to thoſe, which ſhall be inflicted on them, who tranſgreſs againſt knowledge and conſcience.) Rom. 12. 2. Eph. 5. 10. Luke 12. 48.

We are bound to ſtudy truth, to improve our minds in the knowledge and love of it, to be firmly perſuaded of it in a rational way; ſo that we be not eaſily ſhaken, or ſeduced from it.

The *Apoſtles* do charge it upon us, as our duty, and concernment; that we *abound in faith, and knowledge*; that we *be rooted and built up in Chriſt, and ſtabliſhed in the faith, ſo as to be ſtedfaſt, and unmovable*, not to *be ſoon ſhaken in mind or troubled*; *to grow up, and encreaſe in all divine knowledge*; that *the word of God ſhould dwell richly in us in all wiſedom*; that we ſhould *be filled with all knowledge, ſo as to be able to teach, and admoniſh one another*; that *our love ſhould abound more and more in knowledge and all judgment, that we may approve things excellent* (or ſcan things different) that we *be enriched in all the word* (that is, in all the doctrine of the Goſpel) *and in all knowledge*: that *we be filled in the knowledge of God's will in all wiſedom and ſpiritual underſtanding*; that we ſhould not be unwiſe, *but underſtanding what the will of the Lord is*; That we ſhould *be perfect* 2 Cor. 8. 7. Col. 2. 7. 1 Cor. 15. 58. 2 Theſſ. 2. 2. Col. 1. 10. 2 Pet. 3. 18. 2. 2. Eph. 4. 15. Col. 1. 16. Rom. 5. 14. Heb. 5. 12. Phil. 1. 9, 10. 2 Cor. 1. 5. Col. 1. 9. Eph. 5. 17.

Col. 4. 12. *perfect and complete in all the will of God* (that is, first, in the knowledge
1 Cor. 14. 20. of it; then, in compliance with it) that *in underſtanding we ſhould not be*
Heb. 9. 12. *children, but perfect men.*

Matt. 7. 15. We are likewiſe by them commanded to *take heed of falſe Prophets*, to
1 John 4. 1. *try the ſpirits, whether they are of God, to ſee that no man deceive us*; to
Matt. 24. 4. Eph. 5. 6. *look that no man ſpoil us by vain deceit, to try all things, and hold faſt that*
Col. 2. 8, 18. *which is good*; which precepts imply, that we ſhould be furniſhed with a
1 Theſſ. 5. 21. good faculty of judgment and competent knowledge in the principal matters of Chriſtian doctrine, concerning both the myſteries of faith, and rules of practice. Our *Lord* himſelf, and his *Apoſtles* did not upon other terms than of rational conſideration and diſcuſſion exact credit and obedience to their words, they did not inſiſt barely upon their own authority, but exhorted their Diſciples to examine ſtrictly, and judge faithfully con-
John 5. 39. cerning the truth and reaſonableneſs of their doctrine: *Search the Scrip-*
John 10. 37, 38. 15. 22, 24. 12. 48. *tures*, for *they teſtifie of me*; *If I doe not the works of my Father, believe me not*; *but if I do, though ye believe me not, believe the works*: ſo our Lord appealed to their reaſon, proceeding upon grounds of Scripture, and
1 Cor. 10. 15. common ſenſe: and, *I ſpeak as to wiſe men, judge ye what I ſay*; ſo Saint *Paul* addreſſed his Diſcourſe to his Diſciples; otherwiſe we ſhould be uncapable to obſerve them.

We are alſo bound to defer the principal regard to God's wiſedom and will, ſo as, without reſervation or exception, to embrace whatever he doth ſay, to obey what he poſitively doth command: whatever authority doth contradict his word, or croſs his command, in ſuch caſes we may remon-
Acts 4. 19. ſtrate with the *Apoſtles*, *If it be juſt before God to hearken unto you rather*
Acts 5. 29. *than unto God, judge ye*: and, *we ought to obey God rather than men*; we
Gal. 1. 8. may denounce with St. *Paul, if an angel from heaven preach any other Goſpel, let him be accurſed.*

Rom. 14. 23. We are obliged always to act *with faith* (that is, with a perſuaſion concerning the Lawfulneſs of what we doe) for, *Whatever is not of faith*, is
Rom. 14. 22. *ſin: We ſhould never condemn our ſelves in what we try or* embrace.

Theſe things conſidered, we may, and it much behoveth us, reſerving due reſpect to our Guides, with humility and modeſty to weigh and ſcan their dictates, and their orders; leſt by them unawares we be drawn into
Acts 17. 11. errour or ſin; like the ingenuous *Beræans*, who did ἀνακρίνειν τὰς γραφὰς, *ſearch and examine the ſcriptures, if thoſe things were ſo.* Our Guides are
2 Cor. 1. 24. but the *helpers*, they are not Lords of our faith; the *Apoſtles* themſelves were not.

We may, and are bound, if they tell us things evidently repugnant to God's word, or to ſound reaſon and common ſenſe, to diſſent from them; if they impoſe on us things evidently contrary to God's Law, to forbear compliance with them; we may in ſuch caſes appeal *ad legem & teſtimonium*; we muſt not admit a *non obſtante* to God's Law.

Iſa. 8. 20.
Plebs timens Dominum ſeparare ſe debet à peccatore præpoſito. Cypr.

If other arguments (weighed in the balance of honeſt and impartial reaſon, with cautious and induſtrious conſideration) do overpoiſe the authority of our Guides; let us in God's name adhere to them; and follow our own judgments; it would be a violation of our conſcience, a prevarication toward our own ſouls, and a rebellion againſt God to doe otherwiſe: when againſt our own mind, ſo carefully informed, we follow the dictates of others, we like fools raſhly adventure and proſtitute our ſouls.

This proceeding is no-wiſe inconſiſtent with what we delivered before; for this due warineſs in examining, this reſervation in aſſenting, this exception

ception in practice, in ſome caſes, wherein the matter hath evidence, and we a faculty to judge, doth no-wiſe hinder, but that we ſhould defer much regard to the judgment of our Guides; that we ſhould in thoſe caſes, wherein no light diſcovereth it ſelf outſhining their authority, rely upon it; that where our eyes will not ſerve clearly to direct us, we ſhould uſe theirs; where our reaſon faileth to ſatisfie us, we ſhould acquieſce in theirs; that we ſhould regard their judgments ſo far, that no petty ſcruple emerging, no faint ſemblance of reaſon ſhould prevail upon us to diſſent from their doctrine, to reject their advice, to diſobey their injunctions.

In fine, let us remember, that the mouth of truth, which bid us to *beware of the* bad *doctrine* of thoſe who *ſate in Moſes's chair*, did alſo charge us *to obſerve all they taught and enjoined*; that is, all not certainly repugnant to the divine Law. In effect, if we diſcoſt from the advices of our ſober teachers, appointed for us by God; we ſhall in the end have occaſion to bewail with him in the Proverbs: *How have I hated inſtruction, and my heart deſpiſed reproof? And have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that inſtructed me?* Matt. 15. 14. 23. 3. Prov. 5. 12, 13.

To theſe things I ſhall onely add one rule, which we may well ſuppoſe compriſed in the precept we treat upon; which is, that at leaſt we forbear openly to diſſent from our Guides, or to contradict their doctrine; except onely, if it be not ſo falſe (which never, or rarely can happen among us) as to ſubvert the foundations of faith, or practice of holineſs. If we cannot be internally convinced by their diſcourſes, if their authority cannot ſway with us againſt the prevalence of other reaſons, yet may we ſpare outwardly to oppoſe them, or to ſlight their judgment; for doing thus doth tend as to the diſgrace of their perſons, ſo to the diſparagement of their office, to an obſtructing the efficacy of their Miniſtery, to the infringement of order and peace in the Church: for when the inconſiderate people ſhall ſee their teachers diſtruſted and diſreſpected; when they perceive their doctrine may be challenged, and oppoſed by plauſible diſcourſes; then will they hardly truſt them, or comply with them in matters moſt certain and neceſſary; than which diſpoſition in the people there cannot happen any thing more prejudicial or banefull to the Church.

But let thus much ſerve for the obedience due to the doctrine of our Guides: let us conſider that which we owe to them in reference to their converſation, and practice.

The following their practice may well be referred to this precept; for that their practice is a kind of living doctrine, a viſible law, or rule of action; and becauſe indeed the notion of a Guide primarily doth imply example; that he which is guided ſhould reſpect the Guide as a Precedent, being concerned to walk after his footſteps.

Moſt of the reaſons, which urge deference to their judgment in teaching, do in proportion infer obligation to follow their example, (which indeed is the moſt eaſie and clear way of inſtruction to vulgar capacity; carrying with it alſo moſt efficacious encouragement and excitement to practice:) they are obliged, and it is expected from them to live with eſpecial regularity, circumſpection, and ſtrictneſs of converſation; they are by God's grace eſpecially diſpoſed, and enabled to doe ſo; and many common advantages they have of doing ſo; (a more perfect knowledge of things, firmneſs of principles, and clearneſs of notions; a deeper tincture, and more ſavoury reliſh of truth, attained by continual meditation thereon; conſequently a purity of mind and affection, a retirement from

from the world and its temptation, freedom from diſtraction of worldly care, and the encumbrances of buſineſs, with the like.)

They are often charged to be exemplary in converſation (as we before ſhewed) and that involveth a correſpondent obligation to follow them.

John 5. 35. Apoc. 16. 20. Matt. 5. 14, 16. They muſt (like St. *John Baptiſt*) *be burning and ſhining lights; Stars in God's right hand; lights of the world; whoſe light ſhould ſhine before men, that men may ſee their good works;* and by their light direct their ſteps.

They are propoſed as copies, which ſignifies that we muſt in our practice tranſcribe them.

We are often directly commanded to imitate them; ὧν μιμεῖσθε τὴν πίστιν, *whoſe faith imitate ye* (that is, their faithfull perſeverance, in the doctrine and practice of Chriſtianity) ſaith the *Apoſtle* in this *chapter*.

Their converſation is ſafely imitable in all caſes, wherein no better rule appeareth, and when it doth not appear diſcordant from God's Law, and the dictates of ſound reaſon; for ſuppoſing that diſcordance, we ceaſe to be obliged to follow them; as when our Lord preſcribeth in reſpect to the

Matt. 23. 3. Phariſees; *Whatever they bid you obſerve, that obſerve and doe; but doe not after their works; for they ſay and doe not.*

It is indeed eaſier for them to ſpeak well, than to doe well; their doctrine therefore is more commonly a ſure Guide than their practice; yet when there wanteth a clearer guidance of doctrine, their practice may paſs for inſtructive; and a probable argument, or warrant of action.

Sermon XXVIII.

Of Self-love in general.

2 TIM. III. 1.

For men ſhall be lovers of themſelves.

Καιροὶ χαλεποὶ ἐνστήσονται. SAINT *Paul* in this place out of a Prophetical ſpirit inſtructing or warning his Diſciple *Timothy*, concerning *difficult times*, or the calamitous ſtate of things, which ſhould enſue; induced upon the World, as it uſeth to happen, by a general prevalency of vitious diſpoſitions and practices among men, doth thence take occaſion by a ſpecification of their vices to characterize the perſons, who ſhould concur to produce that hard ſtate.

Hæc omnia mala ab eo velut fonte manantia, quod primum poſuit, ſeipſos amantes. Auguſt. *in* Joh. *Tract.* 123.

Among thoſe vices he placeth ſelf-love in the van, as the capital and leading vice; intimating thereby, that it is of all in its nature moſt heinous, or in its influence moſt noxious.

This

This indeed is of all vices the moſt common, ſo deeply radicated in our nature, and ſo generally overſpreading the World, that no man thoroughly is exempted from it, moſt men are greatly tainted with it, ſome are wholly poſſeſſed and acted by it; this is the root, from which all other vices do grow, and without which hardly any ſin could ſubſiſt; the chief vices eſpecially have an obvious, and evident dependence thereon.

All impiety doth involve a loving our ſelves in undue manner and meaſure; ſo that we ſet our ſelves in our eſteem, and affection before God; we prefer our own conceits to his judgment and advice; we raiſe our pleaſure above his will and authority; we bandy forces with him, and are like the prophane *Belſhazzar*, of whom it is ſaid, *Thou haſt lifted up thy ſelf againſt* (or above) *the Lord of Heaven.* Dan. 5. 23.

From hence particularly by a manifeſt extraction are derived thoſe chief and common vices, pride, ambition, envy, avarice, intemperance, injuſtice, uncharitableneſs, peeviſhneſs, ſtubbornneſs, diſcontent and impatience. For,

We overvalue our ſelves, our qualities and endowments, our powers and abilities, our fortunes and external advantages; hence are we ſo proud, that is, ſo lofty in our conceits, and faſtuous in our demeanour.

We would be the onely men or moſt conſiderable in the World; hence are we ambitious, hence continually with unſatiable greedineſs we do affect and ſtrive to procure encreaſe of reputation, of power, of dignity.

We would engroſs to our ſelves all ſorts of good things in higheſt degree; hence enviouſly we become jealous of the worth and vertue, we grudge and repine at the proſperity of others; as if they defalked ſomewhat from our excellency, or did eclipſe the brightneſs of our fortune.

We deſire to be not onely full in our enjoyment, but free and abſolute in our dominion of things; not onely ſecure from needing the ſuccour of other men, but independent in regard to God's providence; hence are we ſo covetous of wealth, hence we ſo eagerly ſcrape it, and ſo carefully hoard it up.

We can refuſe our dear ſelves no ſatisfaction, although unreaſonable or hurtfull; therefore we ſo readily gratify ſenſual appetites in unlawfull or exceſſive enjoyments of pleaſure.

Being blinded, or tranſported with fond dotage on our ſelves we cannot diſcern, or will not regard what is due to others; hence are we apt upon occaſion to doe them wrong.

Love to our ſelves doth in ſuch manner ſuck in and ſwallow our ſpirits, doth ſo pinch in and contract our hearts, doth according to its computation ſo confine and abridge our intereſts, that we cannot in our affection, or in real expreſſion of kindneſs tend outwards; that we can afford little good-will, or impart little good to others.

Deeming our ſelves extremely wiſe and worthy of regard, we cannot endure to be contradicted in our opinion, or croſſed in our humour; hence upon any ſuch occaſion our choler riſeth, and eaſily we break forth into violent heats of paſſion.

From the like cauſes it is, that we cannot willingly ſtoop to due obeiſance of our ſuperiours, in reverence to their perſons, and obſervance of their laws; that we cannot contentedly acquieſce in the ſtation or portion aſſigned us by Providence; that we cannot patiently ſupport our condition, or accept the events befalling us.

In fine, if ſurveying all the ſeveral kinds of naughty diſpoſitions in our ſouls, and of miſcarriages in our lives, we do ſcan their particular na-

ture, and ſearch into their original cauſes; we ſhall find inordinate ſelf-love to be a main ingredient, and a common ſource of them all: ſo that a *Divine* of great name had ſome reaſon to affirm, that *original ſin* (or that innate diſtemper from which men generally become ſo very prone to evil, and averſe to good) doth conſiſt in ſelf-love, diſpoſing us to all kinds of irregularity, and exceſs: St. *Paul* therefore might well ſet this in the front of all thoſe ſins, which depraved the Age he ſpake of; they having all ſuch a dependence on it.

Eſt ergò iſta ad peccandum amore ſui propenſio, peccatum originale, &c. Zuingl. *apud* Bell. *de Amiſſ. grat.* 4. 2.

It is therefore very requiſite that we ſhould well underſtand this fault, that we may be the better able to curb and correct it; to which purpoſe I ſhall endeavour, by God's help, ſomewhat to declare its nature.

The word *ſelf-love* is ambiguous; for all ſelf-love is not culpable; there is a neceſſary and unavoidable, there is an innocent and allowable, there is a worthy and commendable ſelf-love.

There is a ſelf-love, originally implanted by God himſelf in our nature, in order to the preſervation and enjoyment of our being; the which is common to us with all Creatures, and cannot any-wiſe be extirpated; for *No man* (as St. *Paul* ſaith) *ever yet hated his own fleſh, but nouriſheth, and cheriſheth it:* Every man living, by a natural and neceſſary inſtinct, is prompted to guard his life, ſhunning all dangers threatning its deſtruction; to pourvey for the ſupport and convenience of it; to ſatisfy thoſe natural appetites, which importunately crave relief, and without intolerable pain cannot be denied it; to repell or decline whatever is very grievous, and offenſive to nature; the ſelf-love, that urgeth us to doe theſe things, is no more to be blamed, than it can be ſhunned.

Eph. 5. 29.

Panis ematur, olus, vini ſextarius; adde
Queis humana ſibi doleat natura negatis.
Hor. *Serm.* I. 1.

Reaſon farther alloweth ſuch a ſelf-love, which moveth us to the purſuance of any thing apparently good, pleaſant, or uſefull to us, the which doth not contain in it any eſſential turpitude or iniquity; doth not obſtruct the attainment of ſome true, or greater good; doth not produce ſome overbalancing miſchief; doth not infer harm to the World, or wrong to other men.

Τὸν μὲν ἁπλῶς δεῖ φίλαυτον εἶναι· ἢ γὰρ αὐτὸς ὀνήσεται τὰ καλὰ πράξων, ἢ τοῖς ἄλλοις ὠφελήσει· ἢ δὲ μοχθηρὸν οὐ δεῖ, βλάπτει γὰρ ἢ ἑαυτὸν ἢ τοὺς πέλας, φαύλοις πάθεσιν ἑπόμενον. Ariſt. *Eth.* 9. 8.

Reaſon dictateth and preſcribeth to us, that we ſhould have a ſober regard to our true good, and welfare; to our beſt intereſt, and ſolid content; to that, which (all things being rightly ſtated, conſidered and computed) will in the final event prove moſt beneficial, and ſatisfactory to us: a ſelf-love working in proſecution of ſuch things common ſenſe cannot but allow and approve.

Πᾶς γὰρ νοῦς αἱρεῖται τὰ βέλτιστα ἑαυτῷ, ὁ δ' ἐπιεικὴς πειθαρχεῖ τῷ νῷ. Ariſt. *Eth.* 9. 8.

God himſelf hath to theſe ſuggeſtions of nature, and dictates of reaſon, adjoined his own ſuffrage, having in various ways declared it to be his will and pleaſure, that we ſhould tender our real and final good. He as the authour of nature, and fountain of reaſon, may be ſuppoſed to ordain that, unto which nature doth ſo potently incline, and which reaſon ſo clearly preſcribeth. He plainly hath to every man committed himſelf in charge, ſo as to preſerve his being from ruine, and to enjoy it with comfort. He by making ſo rich a proviſion for the ſuſtenance of our lives, and ſatisfaction of our appetites, by framing our bodies to reliſh delight, and ſuting ſo many accommodations in wondrous correſpondence to our ſenſes, hath ſufficiently intimated it to be his pleaſure, that we ſhould

Quia tutela certiſſima ex proximo eſt, ſibi quiſque commiſſus eſt. Sen. *Ep.* 121.

ſhould in reaſonable meaſure ſeek them and enjoy them; otherwiſe his care would have been vain, and his work uſeleſs; yea, he might ſeem to have laid an ill deſign to tempt and enſnare us: he certainly had no ſuch intent, but as he made us out of goodneſs, as he made us capable of taſting comfort, as he hath furniſhed us with means of attaining it, ſo he meaneth that we ſhould partake thereof.

He alſo expreſly hath commanded us to love all men, not excluding our ſelves from the number; to love our neighbour, and therefore our ſelves; who of all are neareſt to our ſelves; who occur as the firſt objects of humanity and charity; whoſe needs we moſt ſenſibly feel; whoſe good is in it ſelf no leſs conſiderable, than the ſingle good of any other perſon; who muſt firſt look to our own good before we can be capable to love others, or do any good to our neighbour.

He therefore hath made the love of our ſelves to be the rule and ſtandard, the pattern, the argument of our love to others; impoſing on us thoſe great commands of *loving our neighbours as our ſelves*, and *doing as we would be done unto*; which imply not onely a neceſſity, but an obligation of loving our ſelves.

He doth enforce obedience to all his commands, by promiſing rewards, yielding immenſe profit and tranſcendent pleaſure to us; and by threatning puniſhments grievous to our ſenſe; which proceeding is grounded upon a ſuppoſition that we do and ought greatly to love our ſelves, or to regard our own intereſt and pleaſure. Matt. 16. 26.

He doth recommend wiſedom or vertue to us, as moſt agreeable to ſelf-love; moſt eligible, becauſe it yieldeth great benefit to our ſelves; becauſe (as the *Wiſe-man* ſaith) *he that getteth it, doth love his own ſoul; he that keepeth it, ſhall find good.* Prov. 15. 8. 16. 11. 17.

Ariſtotle ſaith of a vertuous man, that he is the greateſt *ſelf-lover*; Δόξειε δ' ἂν ὁ τοιῦτος εἶναι μᾶλλον φίλαυτος· ἀπονέμει γὰρ ἑαυτῷ τὰ κάλλιστα, καὶ μάλιστα ἀγαθὰ, καὶ χαρίζεται ἑαυτῷ τῶν κυριωτάτων. Eth. 9. 8.

He diſſuadeth from vice, as therefore deteſtable, becauſe the embracing it doth imply hatred of our ſelves, bringing miſchief and damage to us; becauſe (as the *Wiſe-man* doth expreſs it) *he that ſinneth, wrongeth his own ſoul; he that deſpiſeth inſtruction, deſpiſeth his own ſoul; he that committeth injury, hateth his own ſoul.* Prov. 8. 36. 15. 36. 29. 24.

He commendeth his Laws to our obſervance, by declaring them in their deſign and tendency chiefly to regard our good and advantage; made apt to preſerve the ſafety, and quiet, to promote the wealth and proſperity of our lives; to bring eaſe and comfort to our minds, grace and ornament to our names, ſalvation and happineſs to our ſouls. Deut. 10. 12. Mic. 6. 8. Neh. 9. 13. Prov. 3. & 4, &c.

In fine, God chargeth and encourageth us to affect and purſue the higheſt goods whereof we are capable; moſt ample riches, moſt ſublime honours, moſt ſweet pleaſures, moſt complete felicity; *He* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *will render to them, who by patient continuance in well-doing ſeek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life*; to ſeek ſuch things is the higheſt inſtance, is the ſureſt argument of ſelf-love, that can be; he therefore, who obligeth, who encourageth us thereto, doth plainly ſhew his approbation of a ſelf-love. Rom. 2. 7.

So it appeareth, that all ſelf-love is not culpable, but that ſome kind thereof is very commendable; how then ſhall we diſtinguiſh; how ſhall we *Sever* (to uſe the *Prophet*'s language) *the pretious from the vile?* Jer. 15. 19.

To this we may anſwer in general, that all love of our ſelves, which is unreaſonably grounded, or which is exceſſive in its degrees and limits;

or which venteth it ſelf in wrong inſtances; or which driveth our mind, will and affections toward bad objects; or which produceth effects noxious to our ſelves or others; is culpable. If we eſteem our ſelves for things not true or really for things indifferent or mean, for things nowiſe excellent or valuable; if we affect our ſelves beyond compaſs, ſo as to poſtpone the love of God, or exclude the love of our neighbour; if out of regard to our ſelves we doe things baſe, or miſchievous; if thence we dote upon vain profits, embrace foul pleaſures, incur ſinfull guilt, expoſe our ſelves to grievous danger, trouble, remorſe and puniſhment; if thereby we are engaged to forſake our true intereſt, and forfeit our final happineſs; then aſſuredly it is a fooliſh, and vitious ſelf-love; it is indeed not a proper, but a falſe and equivocal love, uſurping that goodly name; it is a real hatred, or enmity diſguiſed under the ſemblance of friendſhip; it more properly may be called cruelty, treachery, flattery, mockery, deluſion, and abuſe of our ſelves.

But for a more diſtinct and clear reſolution of the caſe, we may doe well to conſider the proper acts of love, which do conſtitute it, or inſeparably do adhere thereto; ſuch as theſe, a good eſteem of the perſon, which is the object of our love; an earneſt good-will toward him, or deſire of his good; a complacence in good, and diſſatisfaction in evil arriving to him; a readineſs to yield, or procure good to him; a deſire of union and enjoyment, that is of intimate converſation and entercourſe with him, a deference of regard to him, a compliance with his deſires, and care to pleaſe him. Now if theſe acts toward our ſelves are in their kind, in their grounds, in their meaſures conformable to reaſon, piety, and juſtice, then is our ſelf-love innocent or worthy: if they are not ſo, it is criminal and vitious.

If we do rightly eſteem our ſelves (both abſolutely, and in compariſon to others;) if we deſire to our ſelves what is fit and juſt; if we are pleaſed with true goods, and diſpleaſed at real evils incident to us; if we do in lawfull ways endeavour to procure things truly convenient, and beneficial to us; if we maintain a faithfull and chearfull correſpondence with our ſelves; if we have a ſober regard to our ſelves agreeable to our nature and ſtate; if we comply with the dictates of our reaſon, and ſatisfy our deſires conforming thereto; then do we love our ſelves innocently, then are we true friends to our ſelves.

But if we overvalue our ſelves; if we do wiſh to our ſelves things incommodious or hurtfull, if we are delighted or diſſatisfied in falſe ſhews of good or evil befalling us; if we ſtrive to acquire for our ſelves things bad or miſchievous; if our converſe with our ſelves is naughty or vain; if we make indecent applications to our ſelves; if we ſtoop to our fond humours, or ſooth our unreaſonable deſires; then is our ſelf-love ſpurious; then are we indeed enemies to our ſelves.

Farther, toward an exact diſcuſſion and trial of this caſe, we ſhould doe well, deveſting our ſelves of ſelfiſhneſs, to conſider our ſelves, as other perſons, or abſtractedly as mere objects of thoſe acts, which love doth imply; for what rectitude, or what obliquity there would be in them in regard to any object, the ſame would be in reference to our ſelves. For inſtance,

If we ſhould value any perſon juſtly according to his real worth, allowing a juſt rate to his vertue, to his parts, to his endowments, to his advantages of nature, or fortune; not aſcribing to him things which belong not to him nor overprizing thoſe he hath, not preferring him in any

any reſpect before thoſe which are his ſuperiours or equals therein; we ſhall herein doe wiſely and juſtly; but if (having our judgment any-wiſe perverted) we do admire a perſon beyond his worth, and advance him above his rank; if we overlook his apparent defects and blemiſhes, or take them for excellencies and yield them applauſe; what is this but folly and dotage, tempered with iniquity? and if it be ſuch in regard to another, it is no leſs ſuch in reſpect to our ſelves.

If to any perſon we ſhould wiſh things, ſutable, commodious, and advantageous, by obtaining which he, without any wrong or prejudice to others, might be conſiderably benefited, we ſhall herein act humanely, and like good friends; but if we deſire things to him, which do not become or befit him; which will doe him miſchief, or which he cannot have without injury and damage to others, are we not herein notoriouſly unkind or unjuſt? the caſe is the ſame, transferred to our ſelves.

If we ſhould obſerve any man by occurrences happening to him well improved in his condition, thriving in an honeſt way, proſperous in good undertakings, growing in worthy accompliſhments of ſoul, to find ſatisfaction therein would be greatly laudable; and ſo it would be to condole, if we ſhould ſee any man to fall into any grievous diſaſter or calamity; but ſhould we behold a man (although in falſe appearance bettered, yet really) prejudiced, and endamaged (as when one is enriched by cozenage or rapine, is advanced by flattery or ſycophantry, is famed for baſe or vain exploits, is immerſed into care and trouble, is expoſed to danger and temptation, is fallen into the enchantments of pleaſure) are we not, if we take pleaſure therein, very ſilly, or very cruel? and if we ſhould obſerve good phyſick adminiſtred to a ſick neighbour, or that he is engaged in painfull exerciſe for his health, ſhould it not be abſurd for us to be ſorry thereat? for the ſame reaſons we are blameable, if we do rejoice, when that we proſper in bad courſes, or enjoy ſinfull pleaſures, or fall into dangerous temptations; if we diſtaſt the wholſome phyſick of adverſity diſpenſed by providence, or diſlike the needfull exerciſes of duty by God preſcribed to us.

If we do yield our advice and aid to our neighbour, in furtherance of any deſign, which is honeſt and beneficial to him, we then unqueſtionably doe well; but if we do abet or encourage him in unjuſt or miſchievous enterprizes; if we render our ſelves pandars to his unlawfull deſires, factours for his unjuſt profits, complices of his wicked practices, advocates of his ſins, is this true love, is this faithfull friendſhip? no ſurely; nor is it ſuch toward our ſelves, when we employ our faculties in contrivance or atchievement of any unlawfull deſigns, however ſatisfactory to our deſires.

If we ſhould indifferently (without regard to the laws of piety, juſtice, humanity, or decency) eſpouſe the intereſts of any perſon, ſo that for the promoting his deſigns, advancing his profit, gratifying his humour or pleaſure, we ſhould violate the commands of God, we ſhould neglect the publick good, we ſhould work injury or miſchief to our neighbour, would this dealing be allowable; neither would it be ſo, if for our own ſake, in regard to our private intereſt we ſhould thus behave our ſelves.

2. If we do affect to hold free, ſincere, chearfull, kind converſation with any perſon for mutual inſtruction, and comfort, this is ſociable and friendly; but if we maintain frothy, foul, malitious, any-wiſe peſtilent diſcourſe, apt to corrupt, or to annoy him, this is loathſome; and ſo it is,

if

if we keep ſuch entercourſe with our ſelves, harbouring vain, impure, unjuſt, uncharitable thoughts in our minds.

If we ſhould defer regard to any man, anſwerable to his worth; we ſhould thereby practiſe according to the good rules of humanity; but ſhould we ſo affect or fanſie any man that we ſhould care for no man elſe, ſhould pay no due reſpect, or perform any office of kindneſs otherwhere; ſhould take no man's word, or mind any man's opinion beſide; nor care to converſe with any other; would this be love, would it not be ridiculous fondneſs? it is no leſs, if in regard to our ſelves, we are ſo moroſe, ſurly, or neglectfull.

If we ſhould comply with any man's reaſonable deſire, this were fair and courteous; if we ſhould confide in the probable aſſiſtence of any perſon, this were modeſt prudence; but if we ſhould entirely conform our practice to the will or humour of another, againſt the dictates of our own reaſon, and to the harm of our ſelves or others; would this be love, would it not rather be vile and pitifull ſlavery? If we ſhould without any ground, yea againſt plain reaſon rely upon the help, or direction of another, would this be love, would it not rather be wild preſumption? the ſame therefore it muſt be in us, if we in like manner are devoted to our own will, or confident in our own ability.

If we ſhould commend any man for good qualities or good deeds, this is honeſt; if we ſhould encourage him in good undertakings, this is charitable; but to applaud his defects, to bolſter him in ill practice, this is flattery and treachery: and in ſo doing toward others, we are not friends to our ſelves, but Traitours and Paraſites.

By ſuch reflexions and compariſons we may, I think, competently underſtand the nature of that baſtard-ſelf-love, which is ſo vitious in it ſelf, and productive of ſo many vices: But more fully to diſplay, and withall to diſſuade us from this vice, I ſhall particularly inſiſt upon the common ſorts thereof, ſhewing the peculiar unreaſonableneſs of each, and the miſchiefs conſequent from it: they are indeed uſually combined and complicated in practice; and have much affinity both in their nature and fruit; but I ſhall as well as I can abſtract them one from the other, and ſo treat on them diſtinctly; they are theſe: *Self-conceit*, *Self-confidence*, *Self-complacence*, *Self-will*, *Self-intereſt*. Theſe I ſhall handle in the following Dicourſes.

SER-

SERMON XXIX.

Of Self-conceit.

2 TIM. III. 2.

For men ſhall be lovers of themſelves, &c.

1. THE firſt and moſt radical kind of vitious ſelf-love is *Self-conceitedneſs*; that which St. *Paul* calleth τὸ ὑπερφρονεῖν, to overween, or *to think highly of ones ſelf beyond what he ought to think.* This doth conſiſt in ſeveral acts or inſtances.

Sometimes we in our imagination aſſume to our ſelves perfections not belonging to us, in kind or in degree; we take our ſelves to be other men than we are; to be wiſe, to be good, to be happy when we are not ſo, at leaſt to be far wiſer, better and happier than we are. The pleaſure naturally ſpringing from a good opinion of our ſelves doth often ſo blind our eyes and pervert our judgment that we ſee in us what is not there, or ſee it magnified or transformed into another ſhape than its own; any appearance doth ſuffice to produce ſuch miſtakes, and having once entertained them, we are unwilling to depoſe them; we cannot endure by ſevere reflexion on our ſelves to correct ſuch pleaſant errours; hence commonly we preſume our ſelves to be very conſiderable, very excellent, very extraordinary perſons, when in truth we are very mean and worthleſs; ſo did St. *Paul* ſuppoſe when he ſaid, *If a man think himſelf to be ſomething, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himſelf*; ſuch was the caſe of that Church in the *Apocalypſe*; *Thou ſayeſt I am rich and encreaſed in goods, and have need of nothing; and knoweſt not, that thou art wretched and miſerable*; they were like men in a dream, or in a frenzy, who take themſelves for great and wealthy perſons, when indeed they are in a ſorry and beggarly condition; into the like extravagancies of miſtake we are all likely to fall, if we do not very carefully, and impartially examine and ſtudy our ſelves.

Gal. 6. 3.

Apoc. 3. 17.

Again, ſometimes we make vain judgments upon the things we do poſſeſs, prizing them much beyond their true worth and merit; conſequently overvaluing our ſelves for them; the moſt trivial and pitifull things (things which in themſelves have no worth, but are mere tools, and commonly ſerve bad purpoſes; things, which do not render our ſouls any-wiſe better, which do not breed any real content, which do not conduce to our welfare and happineſs) we value at a monſtrous rate, as if they were the moſt excellent and admirable things in the World: have we wit? how witleſs are we in prizing it, or our ſelves for it; although we employ it to no good end, not ſerving God, not benefiting men,

men, not furthering our own good, or any-wiſe bettering our condition with it; although we no otherwiſe uſe it, than vainly to pleaſe our ſelves or others, that is, to act the part of fools or buffoons. Have we learning or knowledge? then are we rare perſons; not conſidering that many a bad, many a wretched perſon hath had much more than we, who hath uſed it to the abuſe of others, to the torment of himſelf; that Hell may be full of learned ſcribes, and ſubtile diſputers, of eloquent Orators and profound Philoſophers; who *when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankfull, but became vain in their imaginations, and their fooliſh heart was darkned*, not conſidering alſo how very defective our knowledge is, how mixt with errour and darkneſs; how uſeleſs and vain, yea how pernicious it is, if not ſanctifyed by God's grace and managed to his ſervice. Have we riches? then are we brave men, as fine and glorious in our conceit as in our outward attire; although the verieſt fools, the baſeſt and moſt miſerable of men, that go on the ground, do exceed us therein; although (as *Ariſtotle* ſaith) *Moſt either not uſe it, or abuſe it.* Although our wealth affordeth us no real benefit or comfort, but expoſeth us to numberleſs ſnares, temptations and miſchiefs; although it hath no ſtability, but eaſily may be taken from us. Have we reputation? how doth that make us highly to repute our ſelves in a ſlaviſh imitation of others? yet nothing is leſs ſubſtantial, nothing is leſs felt, nothing is ſo eaſily loſt, nothing is more brittle and ſlippery than it; a bubble is not ſooner broken, or a wave ſunk, than is the opinion of men altered concerning us. Have we power? what doth more raiſe our minds? yet what is that commonly but a dangerous inſtrument of miſchief to others, and of ruine to our ſelves; at leaſt an engagement to care and trouble? What but that did render *Caligula*, *Nero* and *Domitian* ſo hurtfull to others, ſo unhappy themſelves? what but that hath filled the World with diſaſters, and turned all hiſtory into tragedy? Have we proſperous ſucceſs in our affairs? then we boaſt and triumph in our hearts; not remembring what the *Wiſe-man* ſaith, *The proſperity of fools deſtroyeth them*; and that experience ſheweth, proſperity doth either uſually find or make us fools; that the wiſeſt men (as *Solomon*) the beſt men (as *Hezekiah*) have been befooled by it: thus are we apt to overvalue our things, and our ſelves for them.

Rom. 1. 21.

Ardua res hæc eſt, opinibus non tradere mores.

Matt. 11. 6.

Τῶν πολλῶν οἱ μὲν ἐ χρῶνται τῷ πλούτῳ δὲ μικρολογίαν, οἱ δ' παρεχρῶνται δὶ ἀσωτίαν. Ariſt. *apud* Plut. *in Pelop.*

Prov. 1. 32.

Rarus enim fermè ſenſus communis in illa Fortuna------ Juv. *Sat.* 8.

2 Chron. 32. 25.

There is no way indeed, wherein we do not thus impoſe upon our ſelves, either aſſuming falſe, or miſrating true advantages; the general ill conſequences of which miſdemeanour are, that our minds are ſtuft with dreams and phantaſtick imaginations, in ſtead of wiſe and ſober thoughts; that we misbehave our ſelves toward our ſelves treating our ſelves, like other men than we are, with unſeemly regard; that we expect other men ſhould have like opinions, and yield anſwerable deferences to us; and are, if we find it otherwiſe, grievouſly offended; that we are apt to deſpiſe or diſregard others, demeaning our ſelves inſolently and faſtuouſly toward them; that we are apt to ſeek, and undertake things, which we cannot attain or atchieve; that we neglect the ſuccours needfull to help, or comfort us, and the like; which will appear more plainly by conſidering the ſeveral objects or matters, in which ſelf-conceit is exerciſed: they are eſpecially three; *Intellectual endowments*; *moral qualities*; *advantages of body, fortune* and *outward ſtate.*

1. We

1. We are apt to conceit highly of our ſelves upon preſumption of our *intellectual endowments* or capacities, whether *natural* (as *wit, fancy, memory, judgment*) or *acquired* (as *learning, skill, experience*) eſpecially of that which is called *Wiſedom*, which in a manner comprehendeth the reſt, and manageth them; whereby we rightly diſcern what is true, and what is fit to be done in any caſe propoſed: this we are prone in great meaſure to arrogate, and much to pride our ſelves therein: the world is full as it can hold of Wiſe-men, or of thoſe who take themſelves to be ſuch; not onely abſolutely, but comparatively, in derogation and preference to all others: may it not be ſaid to us as *Job* did to his friends, *No doubt but ye are the people, and wiſedom ſhall die with you*; do we not fanſie our ſelves incomparably wiſe, ſo that all our imaginations are deep and ſubtile, all our reſolutions ſound and ſafe, all our opinions irrefragably certain; all our ſayings like ſo many oracles, or indubitable maxims? do we not expect that every man's judgment ſhould ſtoop to ours? do we not wonder that any man ſhould preſume to diſſent from us? muſt any man's voice be heard, when we ſpeak? do we not ſuppoſe that our authority doth add huge weight to our words, that 'tis unqueſtionably true becauſe we ſay it; that it is preſumption, 'tis temerity, 'tis rudeneſs hardly pardonable to conteſt our dictates? this is a common practice, and that which is often prohibited and blamed in Scripture; *Be not wiſe in thine own eyes*, ſaith the *Wiſeman*; And, *Be not wiſe in your own conceits*, ſaith the *Apoſtle*: And, *I ſay, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himſelf more highly than he ought to think, but to think ſoberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the meaſure of faith.*

1 Cor. 3. 18-- Μωρὸς γενέσθω, ἵνα γένηται σοφός. *Vid.* Chryſ. *in* Phil. *Or.* 7.

Job 12. 2.

Οἱ δοκοῦντες πάνυ τι ὄντες σκιαὶ εἰσιν.

Prov. 3. 7.

Rom. 12. 16.

12. 3.

The great reaſonableneſs of which precepts will appear by conſidering both the abſurdity, and the inconveniences of the practice which they forbid.

If we do reflect either upon the common nature of men, or upon our own conſtitution, we cannot but find our conceits of our wiſedom very abſurd: for how can we take our ſelves for wiſe, if we obſerve the great blindneſs of our mind, and feebleneſs of humane reaſon, by many palpable arguments diſcovering it ſelf? If we mark how painfull the ſearch, and how difficult the comprehenſion is of any truth; how hardly the moſt ſagacious can deſcry any thing, how eaſily the moſt judicious miſtake; how the moſt learned everlaſtingly diſpute, and the wiſeſt irreconcileably claſh about matters ſeeming moſt familiar and facile; how often the moſt wary and ſteady do ſhift their opinions; how the wiſer a man is, and the more experience he gaineth, the leſs confident he is in his own judgment, and the more ſenſible he groweth of his weakneſs; how dim the ſight is of the moſt perſpicacious, and how ſhallow the conceptions of the moſt profound; how narrow is the *horizon* of our knowledge, and how immenſely the region of our ignorance is diſtended; how imperfectly, and uncertainly we know thoſe few things, to which our knowledge reacheth; how anſwerably to ſuch experience we are told in *ſacred Writ*, that *Every man is brutiſh in his knowledge*; that *the Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity*; that *Vain man would be wiſe, though he be born like an Aſſes Colt* (that is, he is naturally wild and ſtupid) that *Wiſedom is hid from the eyes of all men, and is not found in the land of the living*; that *The thoughts of mortal men are miſerable, and our devices uncertain*; if we, I ſay, do conſider ſuch things, how can we but find

Quamcunque partem rerum humanarum divinarúmque comprehendêrit, ingenti copiâ quærendarum ac diſcendarum fatigabitur. Sen. *Ep.* 88.

Jer. 10. 14. Pſal. 94. 11. 1 Cor. 3. 20. Job 11. 12. Job 28. 21, 22. Sap. 9. 14.

find it ſtrange, that any man ſhould admire his own wiſedom, ſeeing that he thereby doth exempt himſelf from the common adjunct of his nature, and forgetteth himſelf to be a man.

If alſo a man particularly reflecteth on himſelf, the ſame practice muſt needs appear very fooliſh; for that every man thence may diſcover in himſelf peculiar impediments of wiſedom; every man in his complexion and in his condition may find things apt to pervert his judgment, and obſtruct his acquiſition of true knowledge: is his temper ſanguine? thence becometh he quick, raſh, credulous, confident and peremptory, ſlippery and fickle: is it phlegmatick? thence is he ſlow and heavy; diffident, pertinacious and ſtiff in his conceits: his mind is either ſoft and limber, ſo as eaſily to receive the impreſſions of falſhood ſpeciouſly repreſented; or hard and tough, ſo that he cannot readily admit inſtruction in truth, or correction of errour. His wealth diſtracteth, or his poverty diſturbeth his thoughts; proſperity ſwelleth his mind up into vain preſumptions and ſatisfactions; or adverſity ſinketh it down into unreaſonable deſpondencies and diſlikes of things; plenty breedeth ſloth, want createth trouble indiſpoſing him to think well; eaſe doth ruſt his parts, and buſineſs weareth them out; inclination, intereſt, company, prejudice do forcibly ſway his apprehenſions; ſo that no man can get himſelf into, or keep himſelf ſteady in a perfect balance, requiſite for exact judgment of things; no man therefore can obtain a degree of wiſedom, whereof he may with any reaſon be conceited; the wiſeſt men ſurely upon ſuch experience have been little ſatisfied with their ſhare; *Surely* (ſaith one) *I am more brutiſh than any man, and I have not the underſtanding of a man:* and, *So fooliſh* (ſaid another) *was I and ignorant, I was as a beaſt before thee:* this conceitedneſs therefore is very abſurd, and an argument of notable ignorance and folly; neither is there perhaps any more plain inſtance or demonſtration of general folly reigning among men, than this, that commonly we are ſo blind and ſtupid as not to diſcern and reſent our own folly; *If any man* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *thinketh that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth not any thing yet as he ought to know:* that is, If any man conceiteth himſelf to be conſiderably wiſe, or intelligent, 'tis a plain ſign, that he is very ignorant, and underſtandeth little to any purpoſe.

Prov. 3. 2.
Pſal. 73. 22.
1 Cor. 8. 2.

So it is if we conſider our ſelves ſingly; and it is more ſo, in compariſon to others; for what ground can a man have of arrogating to himſelf a peculiarity of wiſedom, or judgment? to deem himſelf extraordinary in that, to which there are no other than ordinary means of arriving? to fanſie himſelf wiſer than any other, whenas (ſecluding accidental differences, that cannot be accompted for) all men have the ſame parts and faculties of ſoul, the ſame means and opportunities of improvement; the ſame right and liberty of judging about things? did not he, who *formeth the ſpirit of man within him*, put into every man that heavenly mark, whereby we diſcern and judge of things? is not every man concerned in that ſaying of *Elihu*; *there is a ſpirit in men, and the inſpiration of the Almighty giveth them underſtanding*? do not the fountains of knowledge (natural delight, divine revelation, humane inſtruction, continual experience) ſtand open to all; and are no leſs common to men, than is the air they breathe, and the Sun, which equally ſhineth on them all? is God, the donour of wiſedom, partial in the diſtribution of it; doth not that overture reach indifferently to all, *If any man lack wiſedom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, — and it ſhall be given him*? may not others be as inquiſitive, as induſtrious, as ſincere as we in the ſearch

Zech. 12. 1.
Ἐν βεσνῆς. LXX.
Job 32. 8.
Jam. 1. 5.

ſearch of truth, why not then as ſucceſsfull in finding it? is there any private chink, through which light ſhineth onely upon us, or truth may be eſpied? is there any cunning by-path, in which we alone, with more expedition and ſecurity, than others in the common roads, can travel on toward knowlege? what patents have we to ſhew for monopoly of reaſon; what right have we to engroſs any knowledge; who hath granted us a privilege of ſure judgment, or an exemption from errour? how can we in trial of things claim more than a ſingle vote; or why ſhould our word have more weight, than any other? may not any man with as much reaſon prefer his judgment before ours, as we before his; and if we blame him for it, do we not thereby condemn our ſelves for doing the like? if we do know but the ſame things, or frame the ſame judgments with others, how can we be conceited of that which is promiſcuous; if we pretend to abſtruſe notions, or hold forth paradoxes, how can that be ground of boaſting, ſeeing the cauſe ſtandeth conteſted by authority no leſs than our own, and that it is vain to triumph over the opinions of others before we have conquered them? why in ſuch caſes is it not reaſonable to preſume that among the many diſſenters from us, there are ſome who have as much ſenſe as we, and who have weighed the matter with no leſs care, no leſs indifferency? In fine, may not any man with good cauſe propound to us that expoſtulation in *Job: Haſt thou heard the ſecret of God, and doſt thou reſtrain wiſedom to thy ſelf? what knoweſt thou that we know not, what underſtandeſt thou which is not in us?* Job 15. 8.

Such conceitedneſs therefore is very abſurd; and it is no leſs hurtfull; for many great inconveniences, many ſad miſchiefs ſpring from it, ſuch as gave the *Prophet* cauſe to denounce, *Wo unto them that are wiſe in their own eyes, and prudent in their own conceit:* it hath many ways bad influence on our ſouls, and on our lives; it is often our caſe, which was the caſe of *Babylon*, when the *Prophet* ſaid of it, *Thy wiſedom and thy knowledge hath perverted thee; for thou haſt ſaid in thy heart, I am, and none elſe beſide me.* Iſa. 5. 21. Iſa. 47. 10.

It is a great bar to the getting wiſedom, to the receiving inſtruction and right information about things; for he that taketh himſelf to be abundantly knowing, or incomparably wiſe, will not care to learn, will ſcorn to be taught; he thence becometh more incapable of wiſedom, than a mere Idiot; ſo did *Solomon* obſerve, *Seeſt thou*, ſaid he, *a man wiſe in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him*; of a fool that is ſenſible of his own ignorance, there may be hope, that he may by inſtruction become wiſe; but he that taketh himſelf to want no inſtruction, or to be above learning, is in a deſperate condition. Prov. 26. 12.

Hæc eſt hominis vera ſapientia imperfectum eſſe ſe noſſe. Hier. *contra* Pelag. 1. 5.

Puto multos potuiſſe ad ſapientiam pervenire, niſi putaſſent ſe pervenisse. Sen. *de tranq. an.* 1.

It rendereth men in doubtfull, or difficult caſes unwilling to ſeek, and unapt to take advice; he will not care for, or admit any counſellor but himſelf; hence he undertaketh and eaſily is deceived, and incurreth diſappointment, damage, diſaſters in his affairs. As it is moſt incident to weak, inconſiderate, lazy perſons, who have not a capacity, will not yield attention, or take pains to get right notions of things, ſo it doth ſmother all induſtry, conſideration and circumſpection; for ſuch perſons think they need no labour in ſearching truth, no care in weighing arguments, no diligence in obſerving things; they can eaſily at firſt ſight deſcry all, and penetrate to the bottom of things; they have at eaſie rates the pleaſure of fanſying themſelves wiſe; why ſhould they ſpend farther pains

to diſpoſſes themſelves of that pleaſure, or to introduce another leſs ſatiſ-
Prov. 26. 16. factory? thus *is the ſluggard* (as *Solomon* ſaith) *wiſer in his own conceit, than ſeven men that can render a reaſon.*

It rendreth us very raſh and precipitant in judging; for the firſt ſhews of things, or the moſt ſlender arguments, which offer themſelves, being magnified, and aggravated from opinion concerning our ſelves, do ſway our judgment, and draw forth a ſudden reſolution from us; it muſt, we preſently ſuppoſe, be very reaſonable, becauſe it ſeemeth reaſonable to us.

Hence alſo, we perſiſt obſtinate, and incorrigible in errour; for what reaſon can be efficacious to reclaim him, whoſe opinion is the greater reaſon? what argument can be ponderous enough to outweigh his authority? how can he (the man of wiſedom, the perſpicacious, and profound perſon) yield that he hath erred? how can he part with the ſatisfaction of being always in the right, or endure the affront of being any time baffled?

It rendreth men peeviſh and moroſe, ſo as to bear no-body that diſſenteth from them, nor to like any thing, which doth not hit their fancy; to croſs their opinion and humour, is to derogate from their wiſedom; and being in their apprehenſion ſo injured, they find cauſe to be angry.

It rendreth them inſolent, and imperious in converſation, ſo as to dictate, and impoſe their conceits upon others. He that is conceited of his own wiſedom, will imagine that upon that advantage he hath a right to preſcribe, others an obligation to ſubmit; *eo ipſo* he becometh a common maſter and judge; and they are culpable, who will not yield him a credulous ear, who will not ſtand to his deciſion.

Hence alſo do men become ſo carping and cenſorious; for if any man's words do not jump with their notions, if any man's actions be not conformable to their rules, they ſtreightway riſe up to condemn them of folly, of faultineſs.

Yea hence men become intolerably pragmatical; for they conceit themſelves better to know another's concernment than he himſelf doth, and ſo will intrude his advice, will be angry if his advice be not followed.

To ſuch inconveniences and iniquities this ill-diſpoſition expoſeth us; and to many others; for it is indeed that in effect, which the Holy Scripture repreſenteth as the ſource of all impious and wicked courſes; to which men betray themſelves, while taking themſelves to be wiſe, they do ſtiffly adhere to their own imaginations and devices, although contrary to the preſcriptions of divine wiſedom, to the dictates of common reaſon, to the
Jer. 13 10. 6. 19. admonitions of ſober and good men: *We will* (ſay they in the *Prophet*)
Iſa. 65. 2. 53. 6. *walk after our own devices, and we will every one doe the imagination of his evil heart*; and, *I have ſpread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people: which walketh in a way that is not good, after their own thoughts.*
Deut. 28. 18. And, *If he bleſſeth himſelf, ſaying, I ſhall have peace, though I walk in the*
Pſal. 81. 12. *imagination of my heart:* and, *So I gave them unto their own hearts luſts,*
Prov. 1. 30, 31. *and they walked in their own counſels:* theſe are deſcriptions of bad men,
Iſa. 66. 4. implying ſelf-conceit to be the root of their impiety.

2. Again, we are apt to conceit highly and vainly of our moral qualities and performances; taking our ſelves for perſons rarely good, perfect and blameleſs; apprehending no defects in our ſouls, or miſcarriages in our lives, although indeed we are as full of blemiſhes, we are as guilty of
Prov. 30. 12. faults as others; *There is* (ſaith the *Wiſeman*) *a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not waſhed from their filthineſs*; to this generation

we

we belong if we admire our vertues, if we juſtifie our lives, if (as it is ſaid of the *Phariſee*) we *truſt in our ſelves, that we are righteous.* Luke 18. 9. 16.15. 10.29.

This practice doth include great folly, and it produceth great miſchiefs.

'Tis very fooliſh; and argueth the greateſt ignorance that can be; for ſuch is the imperfection, the impotency, the impurity of all men, even of the wiſeſt and beſt men (diſcernible to them, who ſearch their hearts, and try their ways, ſtrictly comparing them to the rules of duty, God's Laws, and the dictates of reaſon) that no man can have reaſon to be ſatisfied in himſelf, or in his doings: Every man looking into himſelf, ſhall find his mind ſo peſtered with vain and filthy thoughts; his will ſo perverſe, ſo froward, ſo weak, ſo unſteady; his deſires ſo fond and unwarrantable; his paſſions ſo diſorderly and ungovernable; his affections ſo miſplaced, or at leaſt ſo cold, and dull in regard to their right objects; his reſolutions toward good ſo weak and ſlack; his intentions ſo corrupt, or mixt with oblique regards; he that obſerveth his actions, ſhall in the beſt of them (as to the principles whence they riſe, as to the ends they drive at, as to the manner of their performance) find ſo many great defailances, that he will ſee cauſe rather to abhor than to admire himſelf.

Who, let me ask, doth love God with all his ſoul, ſo as to place in him his total content and delight, ſo as to doe all things out of love to him with a regard to his honour and ſervice? ſo as to be willing and glad to part with all things for his ſake? who hath that conſtant, and lively ſenſe of God's benefits and mercies that he ſhould have? who hath a perfect reſignation of will to his pleaſure, ſo as to be diſpleaſed with no event diſpenſed by his hand? who hath ſuch a vigour of faith and confidence in him, as will ſupport him in all wants, in all diſtreſſes, in all temptations, ſo as never to be diſquieted, or diſcouraged by them, ſo as to *caſt on God* (as he is commanded) all the *cares* of his ſoul, and *burthens* of his life? who conſtantly maintaineth a fervour of ſpirit, a ſteadineſs of reſolution, a clear and calm frame of ſoul, an abſtractedneſs of mind from worldly deſires and delights? who continually is fervent, and undiſtracted in his devotion? who with an unwearied and inceſſant diligence doth watch over his thoughts; who doth entirely command his paſſions, and bridle his appetites; who doth exactly govern his tongue, who is perpetually circumſpect over his actions? who loveth his neighbour as himſelf, ſeeking his good, and delighting therein as in his own: being ſorry for his adverſities, as if they had befallen himſelf? who feeleth that contrition of ſpirit, that ſhame, that remorſe for his ſins, or that deteſtation of them, which they deſerve? who is duly ſenſible of his own unworthineſs? very few of us ſurely, if we examine our conſciences, can anſwer, that we are they, who perform theſe duties; and if not, where is any ground of ſelf-conceit? how much cauſe rather is there of dejection, of diſpleaſure, of deſpiſing and deteſting our ſelves? Hier. *in* Lucif. *cap.* 6.

The *Donatiſts* —*remiſſionem peccatorum ſic datæ, quaſi nullum habeatis ipſi peccatum, &c.* Opt. *lib.* 2.

There have indeed been Sects of men (ſuch as the *Novatians*, and the *Pelagians*) who have pretended to perfection and purity; but theſe men one would think did never reade the Scripture, did never conſult experience, did never reflect on their minds, did never compare their practice with their duty; had no conſcience at all, or a very blind and ſtupid one. *Who can ſay, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my ſin?* was a queſtion of *Solomon*, to which he thought no man could anſwer affirmatively of himſelf: *If I juſtifie my ſelf, my own mouth ſhall condemn me; if I ſay I am perfect, it ſhall prove me perverſe*; was the aſſeveration of that perſon, Prov. 20 9. Eccl. 7. 20. Job 9. 20. 15. 15. 25. 4. 4. 18. 9. 2. (Pſal. 143. 2.)

Jam. 3. 2. perſon, whoſe vertue had undergone the ſevereſt trials; *In many things we offend all*; was the confeſſion of an *Apoſtle* in the name of the wiſeſt and beſt men.

Such men indeed (in contemplation of themſelves, and of their doings) have ever been ready to think meanly of themſelves, to acknowledge and bewail their unworthineſs, to diſclaim all confidence in themſelves, to avow their hope wholly to be repoſed in the grace and mercy of God; (in his grace for ability to perform ſomewhat of their duty, in his mercy for pardon of their offences;) to confeſs themſelves (with *Jacob*) *Leſs than the leaſt of God's mercies*; with *David*, that they *are worms, and no men*; with *Job*, that they are *vile, and* unable *to anſwer God*, calling them to accompt, *in one caſe of a thouſand*; that they *abhor themſelves, and repent in duſt and aſhes*; that *after they have done all, they are unprofitable ſervants*: And is he not very blind, who doth ſee in himſelf thoſe perfections, which the greateſt Saints could not deſcry in themſelves? is he not infinitely vain, that fanſieth himſelf more worthy, than they did take themſelves to be?

Job 40. 4. 42. 6. 9. 2. Luke 17. 10.

In fine, Every man is in ſome kind, and degree bad, ſinfull, vile; it is as natural for us to be ſo, as to be frail, to be ſickly, to be mortal: there are ſome bad diſpoſitions common to all, and which no man can put off without his fleſh; there are ſome, to which every man (from his temper, inclination and conſtitution of body or ſoul) is peculiarly ſubject; the which by no care and pain can be quite extirpated; but will afford during life perpetual matter of conflict and exerciſe, to curb them; conceit therefore of our vertue is very fooliſh.

And it breedeth many great miſchiefs.

Matt. 9. 12. John 9. 41. Hence doth ſpring a great ſecurity, and careleſneſs of correcting our faults; for taking our ſelves to be well, we ſee not any need of cure, thence ſeek none, nor admit any.

Yea hence riſeth a comtempt of any means conducible to our amendment, ſuch as good advice, and wholſome reproof; to adviſe ſuch an one is to accuſe him wrongfully, to reprove him is to commit an outrage upon his preſumed integrity of vertue. Hence alſo proceedeth a neglect of imploring the grace and mercy of God; for why ſhould perſons of ſo great ſtrength crave ſuccour; how ſhould they beg pardon, who have ſo little ſenſe of guilt? it is for a weak perſon to cry, Lord help me; it is for a *Publican* to pray, *God be mercifull unto me a ſinner.*

Luke 18. 13.

It breedeth arrogance and preſumption even in devotions, or addreſſes to God, inducing ſuch perſons in unſeemly manner to juſtifie themſelves before God, to claim ſingular intereſt in him, to mind him, and as it were to upbraid him with their worthy deeds, to thank him for their imaginary excellencies; like the conceited *Phariſee*; *God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men, extortioners, unjuſt, adulterers---- I faſt twice a week, I give tythes of all that I poſſeſs.* They cannot demean themſelves toward God as miſerable ſinners, who fanſie themſelves as admirable worthies, and gallants in vertue.

Luke 18. 11.

Alſo, a natural reſult thereof is a haughty contempt of others, venting it ſelf in a ſupercilious and faſtuous demeanour: So it was in the *Phariſees*; *who* (ſaith S. *Luke*) *truſted in themſelves, that they were righteous, and deſpiſed others.* Such perſons obſerving, or ſuſpecting defects and misbehaviours in others, but diſcerning none in themſelves, do in their opinion advance themſelves above their brethren, and accordingly are prone to behave themſelves toward them: ſuch men as they are the eſpe-

Luke 18. 9.

cially

cially good men, the godly, the Saints, the flower of mankind, the choice ones, the darlings of God, and favourites of Heaven; the ſpecial objects of divine love and care: others are impure and profane, rejectaneous and reprobate people, to whom God beareth no good-will or regard; hence proceedeth a contemptuous diſregard or eſtrangedneſs toward other men; like that of thoſe *Separatiſts* in the *Prophet*, who notwithſtanding they were *a people provoking God to anger continually to his face*, Iſa. 65. 5. were yet in conceit of their own ſpecial purity ready to ſay, *Stand by thy ſelf, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou:* whereas thoſe who ſoberly reflecting on their nature, their hearts, their ways, do frame a right judgment of themſelves, can hardly eſteem any man worſe than themſelves; they perceive themſelves ſo frail, ſo defectious, ſo culpable, as to find great reaſon for their compliance with thoſe *Apoſtolical* Precepts; *In lowlineſs of mind, let each man eſteem others better than himſelf*; Phil. 2. 3. *In honour prefer one another.* Rom. 12. 10.

This likewiſe diſpoſeth men to expect more than ordinary regard from others; and they are much diſpleaſed, if they find it not in degree anſwerable to their conceit of themſelves; taking them for filly, envious, or injurious perſons, who forbear to yield it: ſuch excellent perſons muſt in all things be humoured, and cockered, otherwiſe you greatly wrong them.

Hence alſo ſuch men eaſily become diſcontented and impatient; for if they be croſſed in any thing, if any misfortune toucheth them, they take it very ill; ſuppoſing they deſerve it not, but are worthy of better uſage and fortune.

In fine, as this cauſeth a man to behave himſelf untowardly in reſpect to all others (toward God, and toward his Neighbour) ſo thence he moſt unbeſeemingly carrieth himſelf toward himſelf, he is no faithfull friend, no good companion to himſelf, but a fond *mignon*, a vile flatterer, or a profane idolater of himſelf: for (like *Narciſſus*) being tranſported with conceit of his own incomparable beauty or excellency, he maketh love to, and courteth himſelf; finding delight in ſuch conceit, he by all means cheriſheth it, glozing and *flattering himſelf* (as the *Pſalm* hath it) Pſal. 36. 2. *in his own eyes*; repreſenting his qualities to his imagination in falſe ſhapes, he devoutly adoreth thoſe Idols of his brain. Farther,

3. Self-conceit is alſo frequently grounded upon other inferiour advantages; upon gifts of nature (as ſtrength, activity, beauty) upon gifts of fortune (ſo called) as birth, wealth, dignity, power, fame, ſucceſs; upon theſe things men ordinarily much value themſelves, and are ſtrangely pufft up with vain opinion; taking themſelves from them to be great and happy perſons; but ſeeing (as we touched before) theſe things are in themſelves little valuable (as ſerving no great purpoſe, nor furthering our true happineſs), ſeeing they are not commendable (as not depending on our free choice, but proceeding from nature or chance) ſeeing they are not durable or certain, but eaſily may be ſevered from us; the vanity of ſelf-conceit founded on them is very notorious, and I ſhall not inſiſt more to declare it; I ſhall onely recommend the *Prophet*'s advice concerning ſuch things; *Let not the wiſe man glory in his wiſedom, neither let* Jer. 9. 23, 24. *the mighty man glory in his might; let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he underſtandeth and knoweth me; that I am the Lord, which exerciſe loving kindneſs, judgment and righteouſneſs in the earth:* that is, Nothing within us or about us, ſhould elevate our minds, excepting the aſſurance, that God doth govern the World,

World, being ready to protect and ſuccour us; to diſpence mercy and juſtice to us; ſo that how weak and helpleſs ſoever in our ſelves, yet confiding in him, we ſhall never be overwhelmed by any wrong, or miſfortune.

So much concerning Self-conceit, the other parts of vitious Self-love may be reſerved to another occaſion.

SERMON XXX.

Of Self-confidence, Self-complacence, Self-will, and Self-intereſt.

2 TIM. III. 2.

For men ſhall be lovers of themſelves, &c.

Of Self-confidence.

II. ANother like culpable kind of Self-love is that of *Self-confidence*; when men beyond reaſon, and without regard unto God's providence do rely upon themſelves, and their own abilities, imagining that, without God's direction and help, by the contrivances of their own wit and diſcretion, by the prevalency of their own ſtrength and courage, by their induſtrious care, reſolution and activity they can compaſs any deſign, they can attain any good, they can arrive to the utmoſt of their deſires, and become ſufficiently happy, not conſidering that of God (*in whoſe hand our breath is, and whoſe are all our ways; in whoſe hand is the ſoul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind*) all our being, and all our ability do abſolutely depend; that he manageth and turneth all things, diſpenſing ſucceſs according to his pleaſure; that no good thing can be performed without the ſupply and ſuccour of his grace, nothing can be atchieved without the concurrence of his providence; that, *The way of man is not in himſelf, it is not in man that walketh to direct his ſteps*; that, *The preparations of the heart in man, and the anſwer of the tongue is from the Lord*; that, although, *A man's heart deviſeth his way, yet the Lord directeth his ſteps*; that, *No King is ſaved by the multitude of an hoaſt, a mighty man is not delivered by much ſtrength, a horſe is a vain thing for ſafety; The race is not to the ſwift, nor the battel to the ſtrong*: that (as St. *Paul*, one abundantly furniſhed with abilities ſuting his deſigns as any man can be, doth acknowledge) *we are not ſufficient of our ſelves to think any thing, but our ſufficiency is of God*: theſe

Ὅστις γὰρ αὐτὸς ἢ φρονεῖν μόνος δοκεῖ,
Ἢ γλῶσσαν ἢν ἐκ ἄλλος ἢ ψυχὴν ἔχειν.
Οὗτοι διαπτυχθέντες ὤφθησαν κενοί.
Soph. Antig.

Dan. 5. 23.
Job 12. 10.
Jer. 10. 23.
Prov. 16. 1.
Prov. 16. 9. 19.21. 20.24.
Pſal. 33. 16,17.
Eccles. 9. 11.
2 Cor. 3. 5. 2. 16.

theſe oracles of truth, and even dictates of reaſon no leſs than principles of religion they conſider not, who confide in their own abilities, with which nature or fortune do ſeem to have furniſhed them.

This is that inſtance of ſelf-love, which the *Wiſe-man* biddeth us to beware of: *Truſt* (ſaith he) *in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own underſtanding; In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he ſhall direct thy paths.* This is that which he condemneth as fooliſh, and oppoſite to wiſe proceeding; *He that truſteth in his own heart, is a fool; but whoſo walketh wiſely, ſhall be delivered.* Prov. 3. 5, 6. Prov. 28. 26.

This is that, which ſmothereth devotion, and keepeth men from having recourſe to God; while they think it needleſs to ask for that, which they have in their power, or have means of obtaining; this conſequently depriveth them of divine aid, which is afforded onely to thoſe who ſeek it, and confide therein. ----*æquum mi animum ipſe parabo.*

This often engageth men to attempt things raſhly, and cauſeth them to come off unhappily; God interpoſing to croſs them, with purpoſe to cure their errour, or confound their preſumption.

From hence, if God ever ſuffereth their attempt to proſper, they ſacrilegiouſly and profanely arrogate to themſelves the ſucceſs, *ſacrificing to their own net*, and ſaying with him in the *Prophet*, *By the ſtrength of my hand have I done it, and by my wiſedom, for I am prudent.* Iſa. 10. 13.

This cauſeth moſt men to fail of true content here, and of happineſs finally; while taking them to be, where they are not, at home, within their own hand, or reach, they neglect to ſearch after them abroad, there where they onely do lie, in the hand and diſpoſal of God.

Of Self-complacence.

III. A like act of blameable Self-love, is *Self-complacence*, that is, greatly delighting in ones ſelf, or in the goods, which he fanſieth himſelf to enjoy, or in the works, which he performeth: when men in contemplation of their works and atchievements go ſtrutting about, and ſaying with that vain *Prince*, *Is not this great Babylon, that I have built?* when reflecting on their poſſeſſions they applaud and bleſs themſelves, like the *rich man* in the Goſpel, *Soul* (ſaith he, looking upon his accumulated ſtore) *thou haſt much goods laid up for many years:* Such vain Soliloquies do men ordinarily make: Thou haſt (ſaith a man to himſelf) rare endowments of ſoul; a wonderfull skill and ability in this, and that matter; thou art maſter of excellent things; thou haſt managed very important buſineſs, haſt accompliſhed hard deſigns, haſt atchieved brave feats, with great dexterity and admirable ſucceſs, by thy wit, and induſtry; thou haſt framed and vented very curious orations, very facetious ſpeeches, very nervous and pithy diſcourſes; thou haſt put obligations upon this man, and that; thou haſt got much credit and intereſt amongſt men; the World much looketh on thee, loveth and prizeth thee hugely, reſoundeth with thy fame and praiſe; ſurely thy worth is notable, thy deſerts are egregious; how happy art thou in being ſuch a perſon, in performing ſuch things, in enjoying ſuch advantages? Thus, with a ſpurious and filthy pleaſure do men reflect upon and revolve in their minds the goods they deem themſelves to poſſeſs, and the favourable occurrences that ſeem to befall them; being fond of their own qualities and deeds as of their children, which however they are in themſelves, do always appear handſome and towardly unto them; any little thing is great and eminent, Dan. 4. 30. Luke 12. 19.

any ordinary thing is rare, any indifferent thing is excellent to them, becauſe it is theirs; out of any thing, how dry and inſipid ſoever it is in it ſelf, they ſuck a vain and fooliſh pleaſure.

Hence is that honeſt and pure delight, which they ſhould taſte in faith and love toward God, in the hope of future celeſtial things, in the enjoyment of ſpiritual bleſſings, in the conſcience of vertuous practice, quite choaked or greatly damped.

Hence alſo that hearty contrition, and ſober ſadneſs, which by reflexion upon their great defects, and frequent miſcarriages they ſhould continually maintain in their ſouls, is utterly ſtifled.

Hence alſo that charitable complacency in the welfare, and condolency with the adverſities of their brethren is ſuppreſſed; Hence cannot they be ſatisfied with any thing done by others, they cannot apprehend the worthy deſerts, they cannot render due commendation to the good deeds of their neighbour; for while men are ſo pleaſed with their own imaginary felicities, they cannot well diſcern, they will not be duely affected with the real advantages, or diſaſters of themſelves, or of others.

Of Self-will.

IV. Another culpable kind of Self-love is *Self-will*; (αὐθάδεια, pleaſing ones ſelf in his choice, and proceeding, without or againſt reaſon) when a man unaccountably or unreaſonably, with obſtinate reſolution, purſueth any courſe offenſive to others, or prejudicial to himſelf, ſo that he will not hearken to any advice, nor yield to any conſideration diverting him from his purpoſe, but putteth off all, with a ----*Stat pro ratione voluntas:* Say what you can, let what will come on it, I will doe as I pleaſe, I will proceed in my own way; ſo I am reſolved, ſo it ſhall be.

Πεῤὶ ὧν ἂν ἅπαξ τι εἴπω, μηχάνη με αὐδῆς πάλιν. Nero *apud* Dion. Caſſ.

Οἱ ἀμαθεῖς ἰσχυρογνώμονες. Syneſ. Calv.

Vid. Sen. *Ep.* 23. *de Ben.* 438. Arr. 2. 15.

This is that generally which produceth in men the wilfull commiſſion of ſin; although apparently contrary to their own intereſt and welfare, depriving them of the beſt goods, bringing on them moſt heavy miſchiefs; this cauſeth them irreclaimably to perſiſt in impenitence. Hence do they ſtop their ears againſt wholſome counſel, they harden their hearts againſt moſt pathetical, and ſoftning diſcourſes, they *withdraw their ſhoulder, they ſtiffen their neck* againſt all ſober precepts, admonitions and reproofs; they defeat all means and methods of correction; they will not hear God commanding, entreating, promiſing, threatning, encouraging, chaſtiſing; they will not regard the advices and reprehenſions of friends; the moſt apparent conſequences of damage, diſgrace, pain, perdition upon their ill courſes will not ſtir them; their will is impregnable againſt the moſt powerfull attempts to win and better them: Let all the wiſedom in the World ſolicit them, with a *Turn at my reproof*, it ſhall have occaſion to complain; *They would none of my counſel, they deſpiſed all my reproof.*

Neh. 9. 28. Jer. 7. 26. 5. 3. Deut. 31. 27. Prov. 1. 25.

Prov. 1. 23, 25, 29.

This is that alſo more particularly, which breedeth ſo much miſchief to the publick, which peſtereth and diſturbeth private converſation: This maketh converſation harſh, and friendſhip intolerable.

——τάτῳ δ' ἀνδρὶ μήτ' εἶναι φίλον,
Μήτε ξυνεῖναι, ὅστις αὐτάρκη φρονεῖν
Πέποιθε, δῆλος τοὺς φίλους ἡγεμόνας. Eurip.

Hence are men in their demeanour ſo peeviſh and froward, ſo perverſe and croſsgrained, ſo ſtiff and ſtubborn; with much inconvenience to others, and commonly with more to themſelves.

Αὐθάδεια ἐρημία ξυνοικίας. Plat. *ad* Dionem. *Ep.* 4.

Hence

Hence will they not ſubmit to the commands of their Superiours; they will not comply with the cuſtoms of their Countrey, they will not be complaiſant in converſation; but every where raiſe factious oppoſitions, kindle fierce contentions, maintain diſorderly ſingularities: they care not how for enjoying their humour they break the peace of the World, they diſturb the order of things, they create tumults and troubles in any ſociety; they bring vexations and miſchiefs on others, on themſelves. They do not conſider, or value the great harm they bring upon the publick, nor how much themſelves do ſuffer by it; ſo they have their will, what if the ſtate be plunged into confuſion and trouble; what if their neighbours be ſorely incommoded; what if themſelves loſe their eaſe and pleaſure?

It muſt be juſt as they will have it; what if ten to one think otherwiſe; what if generally the wiſeſt men are agreed to the contrary, what if the moſt preſſing neceſſity of affairs do not admit it; what if publick authority (thoſe whom all equity doth conſtitute judges, and to whom God himſelf hath committed the arbitration thereof) do not allow it; yet ſo it muſt be, becauſe they fanſie it, otherwiſe they will not be quiet; ſo do they ſacrifice the greateſt benefits of ſociety (publick order and peace, mutual love and friendſhip, common ſafety and proſperity) to their private will and humour.

This is that, which St. *Paul* ſo often did forbid in word, and diſcountenanced in practice: For the edification of others, to procure advantage to his endeavours, to ſhun offence, to preſerve concord and amity he waved pleaſing his own deſire and fancy, he complyed with the conceits and humours even of thoſe, who were moſt ignorant and weak in judgment; he even ſubjected and *enſlaved* himſelf to the pleaſure of others, directing us to doe the like: *We then* (ſaith he) *that are ſtrong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to pleaſe our ſelves: Let every one of us pleaſe his neighbour for his good to edification: For even Chriſt pleaſed not himſelf* (he adjoineth the great example of our Lord to enforce his own.) Again; *Give none offence,* ſaith he, *Even as I pleaſe all men in all things not ſeeking mine own profit, but the profit of the many, that they may be ſaved: Be ye* (herein) *followers of me, as I am of Chriſt*; and again, *To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak; I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means ſave ſome: Though I be free from all men* (that is, although I have no Superiour, that can command me, or oblige me in theſe matters) *yet have I made my ſelf ſervant to all, that I might gain the more.* What this excellent perſon was in this inſtance of managing Eccleſiaſtical diſcipline, and promoting the Goſpel, that both in the ſame caſes, and in the proſecution of all other deſigns, in all our converſation and practices ſhould we likewiſe be.

Rom. 15. 1, 2, 3.

1 Cor. 10. 33. 11. 1.

1 Cor. 9. 22, 19.

We ſhould in no caſe indulge our own humour or fancy, but ever look to the reaſon of the thing, and act accordingly whatever it requireth.

We ſhould never act, without ſtriving with competent application of mind to diſcern clearly ſome reaſon why we act; and from obſerving the dictates of that reaſon no unaccomptable cauſe ſhould pervert us: Blind will, head-ſtrong inclination, impetuous paſſion ſhould never guide, or draw, or drive us to any thing; for this is not to act like a man, but as a beaſt, or rather worſe than a beaſt; for beaſts operate by a blind inſtinct indeed, but ſuch as is planted in them by a ſuperiour wiſedom, unerringly directing them to a purſuit of their true good; but man is left

Sap. 1. 12. Deut. 30. 19. 1 Cor. 10. 24. *in manu conſilii ſui*, is obliged (under ſore penalties) not to follow blind inclinations or inſtinct; but to act with ſerious deliberation and choice, to obſerve explicite rules and reſolutions of reaſon.

Of Self-intereſt.

Vid. Chryſ. in 1 Cor. *Or.* 25. V. Another culpable ſort of Self-love is that of *Self-intereſt*; when men inordinately or immoderately do covet and ſtrive to procure for themſelves theſe worldly goods merely becauſe profitable or pleaſant to themſelves, not conſidering or regarding the good of others, according to the rules of juſtice, of humanity, of Chriſtian charity; when their affections, their cares, their endeavours do mainly tend to the advancement, advantage, or delight of themſelves; they little caring what cometh on it, who loſeth, who ſuffereth thereby.

They look upon themſelves as if they were all the World, and no man beſide concerned therein, or conſiderable to them; that the good ſtate of things is to be meaſured by their condition; that all is well, if they do proſper and thrive; all is ill, if they are diſappointed in their deſires and projects.

The good of no man, not of their brethren, not of their friends, not of their Countrey doth come with them under conſideration; what ſcandals do ariſe, what diſorders are committed, what miſchiefs are cauſed they matter not, if they get ſomewhat thereby: what if the *Church*, or *State* be reproached, what if the neighbourhood be offended, or diſturbed, what if the World cry out and complain, if they become richer by it, or have their paſſion gratified, or find ſome pleaſure in it?

This is the chief ſpring of injuſtice: for from hence it is, that oftentimes men regard not what courſes they take, what means they uſe, (how unjuſt, how baſe ſoever they be) toward the compaſſing their deſigns: hence they trample upon right, they violate all laws and rules of conſcience, they falſify their truſts, they betray their friends, they ſupplant their neighbour; they flatter and collogue, they wind about and ſhuffle any way, they detract from the worth and vertue of any man, they forge and vent odious ſlanders, they commit any ſort of wrong and outrage, they (without regard or remorſe) doe any thing, which ſeemeth to further their deſign.

This is the great ſource of uncharitableneſs, for from hence men affect no man otherwiſe, than he ſeemeth able to ſerve their turn; the poor therefore is ever ſlighted and neglected by them as unſerviceable, the rich onely is minded and reſpected as capable to promote their ends, they become hard-hearted toward others; not conſidering, or commiſerating their caſe; they will part with nothing from themſelves to thoſe, who need their relief; they delight in nothing which doth not make for their advantage: all their ſhews of friendſhip and reſpect are mercenary, and mere trade; they doe nothing *gratis*, or for love.

This is the great root of all the diſorders, and miſchiefs in the World; this ſelf-love prompteth men to thoſe turbulent ſcramblings, and ſcufflings, whereby good order is confounded; this engageth them to deſert their ſtations, to tranſgreſs their bounds; to invade and encroach upon others with fraud, and violence: did men with any conſcionable moderation mind and purſue their own private intereſt, all thoſe fierce animoſities, thoſe fiery contentions, thoſe *bitter emulations*, thoſe rancorous grudges, thoſe calumnious ſupplantings, thoſe perfidious cozenages, thoſe outrage-

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ous violences, thoſe factious confederacies, thoſe ſeditious murmurings and tumultuous clamours would vaniſh, and ceaſe; ſelf-intereſt it is that gives life and nouriſhment to all ſuch practices, the which embroil the World in diſcord, and diſorder. It is not out of pure madneſs or wanton humour that commonly men engage themſelves and others in thoſe baſe and troubleſome courſes, but out of deſign to get by it; hope of gain to be raked out of publick ruines, and diſorders, is the principle that moveth them, the reward they propound to themſelves for their pains in medling, toward the promoting them; like thoſe who ſet fire on the Town, that they may get opportunity to rifle and pillage.

----nullum furor egit in arma. Bella petunt magnâ victi mercede.----

He that taketh himſelf to be as but one man (naturally like and equal to others) conceiving that he ought to conſider the intereſt and right of other men in the ſame rank with his own, that he in reaſon ſhould be contented with that ſhare, which ariſeth to him by fair means; who thence reſolveth to be ſatisfied with his own lot, to abide quiet in his ſtation, to yield the ſame deference and compliance to others which he can preſume, or pretend to receive from them; who deſires onely to enjoy the gifts of providence, and the fruits of his induſtry, in a due ſubordination to the publick peace and welfare; he will not eaſily ſtrive or ſtruggle for preferments, he will not foment emulations or factions for his advantage, he will never deſign to cozen or ſupplant, to detract or calumniate for advancement of his ends; he thence will not contribute to the miſchiefs, and troubles in the World.

Ut quiſque maximè ad ſuum commodum refert quæcunque agit, ità minimè eſt vir bonus; ut qui virtutem præmio metiantur, nullam virtutem niſi malitiam putant, &c. Cic. *de Leg.* 1.

Self-intereſt therefore is the great enemy to the common-weal; that which perverteth all right, which confoundeth all order, which ſpoileth all the convenience and comfort of Society.

It is a practice indeed (this practice of purſuing ſelf-intereſt ſo vehemently, ſo eſpecially above all things) which is looked upon and cried up as a clear and certain point of wiſedom; the onely ſolid wiſedom, in compariſon whereto thoſe precepts, which preſcribe the practice of ſtrict juſtice, ingenuous humanity, free charity are but pedantical tattles, or notions merely chimerical; So the World now more than ever ſeemeth to judge; and accordingly to act; and thence is the ſtate of things viſibly ſo bad, and calamitous; thence ſo little honeſty in dealings, thence ſo little ſettlement in affairs are diſcernible. But how falſe that judgment is, will appear, if the caſe be weighed in the balance of pure reaſon; and moſt fooliſh it will appear being ſcanned according to the principles of Religion.

In reaſon is it not very abſurd, that any man ſhould look upon himſelf as more than a ſingle perſon; that he ſhould prefer himſelf before another, to whom he is not in any reſpect ſuperiour; that he ſhould advance his own concernment above the publick benefit, which comprehendeth his good, and without which his good cannot ſubſiſt? Can any man rationally conceive, that he can firmly thrive, or perſiſt in a quiet and ſweet condition, when he graſpeth to himſelf more than is due or fitting, when he provoketh againſt himſelf the emulation, the competition, the oppoſition, the hatred and obloquy of all, or of many other perſons?

May not any man reaſonably have the ſame apprehenſions, and inclinations, as we may have; may not any man juſtly proceed in the ſame manner as we may do? will they not, ſeeing us mainly to affect our private intereſt, be induced, and in a manner forced to doe the like?

thence

thence what end can there be of progging, and ſcrambling for things? and in the confuſion thence ariſing, what quiet, what content can we enjoy?

Again; Doth not nature by implanting in our conſtitution a love of ſociety, and averſation from ſolitude, inclinations to pity and humanity, pleaſant complacencies in obliging and doing courteſies to others, appetites of honour and good eſteem from others, aptneſs to approve and like the practices of juſtice, of fidelity, of courteſie, of beneficence, capacities to yield ſuccour and benefit to our brethren dictate unto us, that our good is inſeparably connected and complicated with the good of others, ſo that it cannot without its own impairing ſubſiſt alone, or be ſevered from the good of others; no more than a limb can without ſuffering and deſtruction be torn from the whole?

Is there not to all men in ſome meaſure, to ſome men in a higher degree, a generoſity innate, moſt lovely and laudable to all; which diſpoſeth men with their own pain, hazard and detriment to ſuccour and relieve others in diſtreſs, to ſerve the publick, and promote the benefit of ſociety; ſo that inordinately to regard private intereſt doth thwart the reaſon and wiſedom of nature?

Nec ſibi, ſed toti natum ſe credere mundo.
——nullóſque Catonis in actus
Subrepſit, partémque tulit ſibi nata voluptas.

St. *Paul*, Rom. 9.

The frame of our nature indeed ſpeaketh, that we are not born for our ſelves; We ſhall find man, if we contemplate him, to be a nobler thing, than to have been deſigned to ſerve himſelf, or to ſatisfy his ſingle pleaſure; his endowments are too excellent, his capacities too large for ſo mean and narrow purpoſes. How pitifull a creature were man, if this were all he was made for; how ſorry a faculty were reaſon, if it ſerved not to better uſes? he debaſeth himſelf, he diſgraceth his nature, who hath ſo low conceits, and purſueth ſo petty deſigns.

Nay even a true regard to our own private good will engage us not inordinately to purſue ſelf-intereſt; it being much hugged will be ſmothered, and deſtroyed.

As we are all born members of the World, as we are compacted into the Commonwealth, as we are incorporated into any Society, as we partake in any converſation or company, ſo by mutual ſupport, aid, defence, comfort not onely the common welfare firſt, but our particular benefit conſequently doth ſubſiſt; by hindring or prejudicing them, the publick firſt, in conſequence our particular doth ſuffer; Our thriving by the common prejudice, will in the end turn to our own loſs. As if one member ſucketh too much nouriſhment to it ſelf, and thence ſwelleth into an exorbitant bulk, the whole thence incurreth diſeaſe, ſo coming to periſh, or languiſh; whence conſequently that irregular member will fall into a participation of ruine, or decay; ſo it is in the ſtate of humane Corporations, he that in ways unnatural, or unjuſt (for juſtice is that in humane Societies, which nature is in the reſt of things) draweth unto himſelf the juice of profit or pleaſure, ſo as thence to grow beyond his due ſize, doth thereby not onely create diſtempers in the publick body, but worketh miſchief, and pain to himſelf; he muſt not imagine to eſcape feeling ſomewhat of the inconvenience and miſery, which ariſeth from publick convulſions and diſorders.

So doth reaſon plainly enough dictate; and religion with clearer evidence, and greater advantage diſcovereth the ſame.

Its expreſs Precepts are; that we ſhould aim to love our neighbour as our ſelves, and therefore ſhould tender his intereſts as our own; that we ſhould not in competition with the greater good of our neighbour regard our own leſſer good; that we ſhould not ſeek our own things, but concern our ſelves in the good of others; that we ſhould not conſult our own eaſe and pleaſure, but ſhould contentedly bear the burthens of our brethren: *Look not every man to his own things, but every man alſo to the things of others*; *Let no man ſeek his own, but every man another's wealth*; *Bear one anothers burthens, and ſo fulfil the law of Chriſt: Charity ſeeketh not its own*; theſe are Apoſtolical precepts, and aphoriſms; theſe are fundamental rules and maxims of our holy Religion. Phil. 2. 4. 1 Cor. 10. 24. Gal. 2. 6. 1 Cor. 13. 5.

It chargeth us induſtriouſly to employ our pains, liberally to expend our goods, yea (in ſome caſes) willingly to expoſe and devote our lives for the benefit of our brethren.

It recommendeth to us the examples of thoſe, who have underwent unſpeakable pains, loſſes, diſgraces, troubles and inconveniences of all kinds for the furthering the good of others; the examples of our Lord, and of his Apoſtles, who never in any caſe regarded their own intereſts, but ſpent and ſacrificed themſelves to the publick welfare of mankind.

It repreſenteth us not onely as brethren of one family, who ſhould therefore kindly favour, aſſiſt and grace one another, but as members of one ſpiritual body (*members one of another*) compacted by the cloſeſt bands of common alliance, affection and intereſt, whoſe good much conſiſteth in the good of each other, who ſhould together rejoice, and condole with one another; who ſhould care for one anothers good as for our own; looking upon our ſelves to gain by the advantage, to thrive in the proſperity, to be refreſhed with the joy, to be graced with the honour, to be endamaged by the loſſes, to be afflicted with the croſſes of our brethren; ſo that *If* (as St. *Paul* ſaith) *one member ſuffer, all the members ſuffer with it*; *if one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it*. Rom. 12. 5. 1 Cor. 12. 25. Rom. 12. 15. 1 Cor. 12. 26.

Theſe which I have already handled are the principal kinds of vitious Self-love; there are farther ſome ſpecial acts of kin to them, ſprouting from the ſame ſtock; which I ſhall touch: Such as *Vain-glory*, *Arrogance*, *Talking of ones ſelf*, *Thinking about ones ſelf*. Of theſe I ſhall treat more briefly.

SER-

SERMON XXXI.

Of Vain-glory, Arrogance, Talking and Thinking of ones Self.

2 TIM. III. 2.

For men ſhall be lovers of themſelves, &c.

Of Vain-glory.

WHEN a regard to the opinion, or deſire of the eſteem of men is the main principle, from which their actions do proceed, or the chief end, which they propound to themſelves: inſtead of conſcience of duty, love and reverence of God, hope of the rewards promiſed, a ſober regard to their true good, this is *Vain-glory*. Such was
Matt. 6, &c. Matt. 23. 5. the vain-glory of the *Phariſees*, who faſted, who prayed, who gave alms, who *did all their works that they might be ſeen of men*, and from them obtain the reward of eſtimation and applauſe: this is that which St. *Paul*
Phil. 2. 3. forbiddeth; *Let nothing be done out of ſtrife, or vain-glory.*

When men affect and delight in praiſe from mean, or indifferent things; as from ſecular dignity, power, wealth, ſtrength, beauty, wit, learning,
Pſal. 49. 6. eloquence, wiſedom or craft: as, *There are many* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*) *that boaſt themſelves in the multitude of their riches. Nebuchadnezzar* was raiſed with the conceit of having built a Palace for the glory of his Majeſty,
Φάσκοντες εἶναι σοφοί. Rom. 1. 22. *Herod* was puff'd with applauſe for his Oration, the *Philoſophers* were vain in the eſteem procured by their pretence to wiſedom, the *Phariſees* were elevated with the praiſe accruing from external acts of piety (faſting twice a week, making long prayers, tithing mint and cumin;) all which things being in themſelves of little worth, the affecting of praiſe from them is manifeſtly frivolous, and vain. Honour ſhould be affected
Rom. 2. 7. onely from true vertue, and really good works.

Thoſe who ſeek glory from evil things (*who glory in their ſhame*) from preſumptuous tranſgreſſion of God's law (*Hectorly* profaneneſs and debauchery) from outrageous violence, from overreaching craft, or from any bad quality, are not onely vain-glorious, but impudent.

When men affect praiſe immoderately, not being content with that meaſure of good reputation, which naturally doth ariſe from a vertuous, and blameleſs life.

As all other goods, ſo this ſhould be affected moderately.

It is not worth induſtry, or a direct aim.

When

When they are unwilling to part with the eſteem of men, upon any accompt, but rather will deſert their duty, than endure diſgrace; prizing the opinion of men before the favour and approbation of God: as it is ſaid of thoſe *Rulers*, who *believed in our Lord, but becauſe of the Phariſees did not confeſs him, that they might not be put out of the Synagogue, for they loved the glory of men, rather than the glory that is of God.* John 12. 43. John 5. 44. And thoſe, to whom our Saviour ſaid; *How can ye believe, who receive glory from one another, but do not ſeek the glory that is of God?*

When they purſue it irregularly, are cunning and politick to procure it; hunt for it in oblique ways, lay gins, traps and baits for it; ſuch are oſtentation of things commendable, fair ſpeeches, kind looks and geſtures, devoid of ſincerity, &c. ſuch ways ambitious and popular men do uſe.

This practice is upon many accompts vain and culpable, and it produceth great inconvenience. Τὸ ὑπολὲς, τῦτο δοξάεων καὶ ἀνθρώπων. Naz. Ep. 63.

1. It is vain, becauſe unprofitable. Is it not a fooliſh thing for a man to affect that, which little concerneth him to have, which having he is not conſiderably benefited? Such manifeſtly is the good opinion of men; how doth that reach us; do we feel the commotions of their fancy; doth their breath blow us any good?

2. It is vain, becauſe uncertain. How eaſily are the judgments of men altered? how fickle are their conceits? the wind of Heaven is not more fleeting and variable than the wind of popular air. In a trice the caſe is turned with them; they admire and ſcorn, they approve and condemn, they applaud and reproach, they court and perſecute the ſame perſon, as their fancy is caſually moved, or as fortune doth favour a perſon. Hiſtories are full of inſtances of perſons, who have been now the favourites of the people, preſently the objects of their hatred and obloquy. *Qui dedit hoc hodie, cras auferat idem.*

3. It is vain, becauſe unſatisfactory. How can a man be ſatisfied with the opinion of bad judges; who eſteem a man without good grounds, commonly for things not deſerving regard; who cannot diſcern thoſe things, which really deſerve eſteem, good principles, and honeſt intention? theſe onely God can know, theſe onely wiſe and good men can well gueſs at; it is therefore vain much to prize any judgment but that of God, and of wiſe men, which are but few. *Praiſe becometh not the mouth of a fool.* —*Stultus honores, Sæpe dat indignis.*

How alſo can a man rationally be pleaſed with the commendation of others, who is ſenſible of his ſo great defects, and conſcious to himſelf of ſo many miſcarriages? which conſidering he ſhould be aſhamed to receive, he ſhould in himſelf bluſh to own any praiſe. *Falſus honor juvat, &c. Quem niſi mendoſum?*

4. It is vain, becauſe fond. It is ugly and unſeemly to men; they deſpiſe nothing more than acting out of this principle. It misbecometh a man to perform things for ſo pitifull a reward, or to look upon it as a valuable recompence for his performances; there being conſiderations ſo vaſtly greater to induce and encourage him; the ſatisfaction of conſcience, the pleaſing God, and procuring his favour; the obtaining eternal happineſs.

5. It is vain, becauſe unjuſt. If we ſeek glory to our ſelves, we wrong God thereby, to whom the glory thereof is due. If there be in us any natural endowment conſiderable (ſtrength, beauty, wit,) it is from God, the authour of our being and life: Is there any ſupervenient or acquiſite perfection (as skill, knowledge, wiſedom) it is from God, who gave us the means and opportunities of getting it, who guided our proceeding and bleſſed our induſtry: Is there any advantage of fortune belonging to

us (as dignity, power, wealth,) it is the gift of God, who diſpenceth theſe things, who diſpoſeth all things by his providence: Is there any vertuous diſpoſition in us, or any good work performed by us; it is the production of God, *who worketh in us to will, and to doe according to his good pleaſure:* Have we any good, that we can call our own; that we have independently and abſolutely made, or purchaſed to our ſelves; if not any, why do we aſſume to our ſelves the glory of it, as if we were its makers or authours? 'tis St. *Paul*'s expoſtulation; *who made thee to differ? what haſt thou, which thou didſt not receive? And if thou didſt receive it, why doſt thou glory, as if thou hadſt not received it?*

Phil. 2. 13.
1 Cor. 4. 7.
John 3. 27.

This is that which maketh this vice ſo odious to God, who is ſenſible of the injury done him, in robbing him of his due honour: how ſenſible he is he ſhewed in that great inſtance of ſmiting *Herod* with a miraculous vengeance; becauſe he did not *give the glory to God*, but arrogated glory to himſelf, receiving with complacence, the profane flatteries of the people. He hath ſaid, *I will not give my glory to another.*

Acts 12. 23.

6. It is vain, becauſe miſchievous. It corrupteth our mind with a lewd pleaſure, which choaketh the purer pleaſures of a good conſcience, ſpiritual joy and peace.

It incenſeth God's diſpleaſure; who cannot endure to ſee us act out of ſo mean and baſe a principle.

It depriveth us of the reward, due to good works, performed out of pure conſcience, and other genuine principles of *piety*. Ἀπέχουσι τὸν μισθὸν; *They have their reward.*

Matt. 6. 1.

7. It is vain, becauſe unbeſeeming us.

It is obſervable, that the Word הלל ſignifieth to praiſe or applaud, and alſo to infatuate, or make mad.

Glory doth ſit unhandſomely upon us, who are ſo weak and frail, who are ſo impure and ſinfull, who are ſo liable to reproach and blame: 'tis like purple on a Beggar---a *Panegyrick* upon a Fly. When all is ſaid that can be well of us, we are ridiculous, becauſe a thouſand times more might be ſaid to our diſparagement and diſgrace. For one good quality we have many bad, for one good deed we have done numberleſs evil. The beſt things we have or doe, yield greater matter of diſpraiſe than commendation, being full of imperfection and blemiſh.

Job 12. 17.
Iſa. 44. 25.
Eccleſ. 7. 8.
2. 2.

Abſolutely ſo; comparatively much more; what are we in compariſon to God; whoſe excellency if we conſider, and our diſtance from his perfections, how can we admit commendation? how can we take any ſhare of that which is wholly his due?

If we conſider even the bleſſed Angels, and Saints, and how far ſhort we come of them; what can we ſay, but praiſe them who are ſo worthy, and abhorr our ſelves who are ſo vile?

Seeing there are ſuch objects of praiſe, how can it be conferred on a mortal, vile, wretched creature?

Of Arrogance.

When a man (puffed up with conceit of his own abilities, or unmeaſurably affecting himſelf) doth aſſume to himſelf, that which doth not belong to him; (more than in reaſon and juſtice is his due, in any kind, more honour, more power, more wiſedom, &c.)

When he encroacheth on the rights, invadeth the liberties, intrudeth into the offices, intermedleth with the buſineſſes, impoſeth on the judg-

ments

ments of others. When he will be adviſing, teaching, guiding, checking, controlling others without their leave, or liking.

When he will unduly be exerciſing judgment and cenſure upon the perſons, qualities, and actions of his neighbour.

Theſe are inſtances and arguments of vitious Self-love. He that doth rightly underſtand, and duly affect himſelf, will contain himſelf within his own bounds, will mind his own affairs, will ſuffer every man undiſturbedly to uſe his own right and liberty in judging and acting.

The effects of this practice are; diſſentions, diſſatisfactions, grudges, &c. for men cannot endure ſuch fond and unjuſt uſurpations upon their rights, their liberties, their reputations.

Of Talking of ones ſelf.

Περιαυτολογία, *Talking about ones ſelf*, is an effect and manifeſt ſign of immoderate Self-love.

It may ſeem a very ſlender and particular matter, but is of great uſe to be conſidered and corrected.

To talk much of ones ſelf; of his own qualities, of his concernments, of his actions; ſo as either down-rightly to commend ones ſelf, or obliquely to inſinuate grounds of commendation; to catch at praiſe; or however to drive on our own deſigns and intereſts thereby.

'Tis an argument of Self-love; proceeding from a fulneſs of thought concerning ones ſelf; and a fond affection to ones own things (*Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth ſpeaketh*; aſſuredly we think much of that, and we like it greatly, concerning which we are prompt to diſcourſe: the imaginations and affections diſcharge themſelves at the mouth.)

This is a fooliſh and hurtfull practice. For,

1. It is vain, and hath no effect. We thereby ſeek to recommend our ſelves to the opinion of men; but we fail therein; for our words gain no belief. For no man is looked upon as a good judge, or a faithfull witneſs in his own caſe; A good judge, and a faithfull witneſs muſt be indifferent, and diſintereſted; but every man is eſteemed to be favourable, to be partial in his opinion concerning himſelf; to be apt to ſtrain a point of truth and right in paſſing teſtimony or ſentence upon himſelf: He therefore that ſpeaketh of himſelf is not believed, his words have no good effect on the hearers: it is true what the *Wiſeman* obſerveth: *Moſt men will proclaim every one his own goodneſs, but a faithfull man who can find?* (but it is hard to find one, who in making report, or paſſing judgment concerning himſelf will be faithfull and juſt.) Καυχᾶσθαι δ᾽ συμφέρει μοι. Prov. 20. 6. 2 Cor. 12. 1.

2. Yea it uſually hath a contrary effect, and deſtroyeth that which it aimeth at. Self-commendation is ſo far from procuring a good opinion, that it breedeth an evil one.

Men have a prejudice againſt what is ſaid, as proceeding from a ſuſpected witneſs; one who is byaſſed by ſelf-love, and bribed by ſelf-intereſt to impoſe upon them. *Not he that commendeth himſelf is approved.* 2 Cor. 10. 18.

It is faſtidious, as impertinent, inſignificant and inſipid; ſpending time, and beating their ears to no purpoſe; they take it for an injury to ſuppoſe them ſo weak as to be moved by ſuch words, or forced into a good conceit. 2 Cor. 10. 13. ὑχὶ τὰ ἄμετρα καυχησόμεθα.

It is odious, and invidious: for all men do love themſelves, no leſs than we our ſelves: and cannot endure to ſee thoſe, who affect to advance themſelves, and reign in our opinion.

It prompteth them to ſpeak evil of us; to ſearch for faults to cool and check us.

It is therefore a prepoſterous and vain way to think of gaining credit and love: men thereby infallibly loſe or depreſs themſelves.

Of all words, thoſe which expreſs our ſelves, and our things; *I*, and *mine*, &c. are the leaſt pleaſing to mens ears.

It ſpoileth converſation: for he that loveth to ſpeak of himſelf, doth leaſt love to hear others ſpeak of themſelves; and ſo is not attentive.

If a man have worthy qualities, and doe good deeds; let them ſpeak for him; they will of themſelves extort commendation; his ſilence about them, his ſeeming to neglect them will enhance their worth in the opinion of men. Prating about them, obtruding them upon men will mar their credit; inducing men to think them done not out of love to vertue, but for a vain-glorious deſign. Thus did *Cicero*, thus have many others blaſted the glory of their vertuous deeds.

Γίγνεται ἄφρων καυχώμενος. 2 Cor. 12. 11. 2 Cor. 11. 17.

3. Suppoſing you get the belief, and the praiſe you aim at, to have complacence therein is bad, or dangerous; 'tis a fond ſatisfaction, 'tis a vitious pleaſure; it puffeth up, it befooleth.

4. It is againſt modeſty. It argueth the man hath a high opinion of himſelf; If he believe himſelf what he ſaith, he hath ſo; if not, why would he perſuade others to have it?

Modeſty cannot without pain hear others ſpeak of him; nor can with any grace receive commendations; it is therefore great impudence to ſpeak of himſelf, and to ſeek praiſe.

5. We may obſerve it to be a great temptation to ſpeak falſely. Men when they affect commendation, will gladly have it to the utmoſt; are loth to wrong themſelves, or to loſe any thing; they will therefore at leaſt ſpeak to the extreme bounds of what may be ſaid in their own behalf; and while they run upon the extreme borders of truth, it is hard to ſtop their carriere, ſo as not to launch forth into falſhood: 'Tis hard to ſtand upon the brink, without falling into the ditch.

It is therefore adviſeable in our diſcourſe to leave our ſelves out as much as may be; never, if we can help it, to ſay, *I*, *mine*, &c. never ſeeking, commonly ſhunning, and declining occaſion to ſpeak of our ſelves: it will bring much convenience and benefit to us.

Our diſcourſe will not be offenſive; we ſhall decline envy, and obloquy; we ſhall avoid being talked of; we ſhall eſcape temptations of vanity; we ſhall better attend to what others ſay, &c.

If we will be ſpeaking of our ſelves, it is allowable to ſpeak ſincerely and unaffectedly concerning our infirmities and faults; as St. *Paul* does of himſelf. 2 Cor. 12. 5. 11. 30.

Plut. πῶς τις ἑαυτὸν ἐπαινήσει. There are ſome caſes, wherein a man may commend himſelf; as in his own defence; to maintain his authority; to urge his example, &c. ſo doth St. *Paul* often. He calleth it folly to boaſt (becauſe generally ſuch it is) yet he doth it for thoſe ends.

Prov. 27. 6. *Let another praiſe thee, and not thine own mouth, a ſtranger, and not thine own lips.*

Thinking of our ſelves.

Thinking of our ſelves, with glee and pleaſure; this is a great nouriſher of immoderate ſelf-love, for the more they indulge to a gazing upon themſelves with delight, the more they grow in love, the more paſſionately they come to dote on themſelves.

It

It is good to reflect inward and to view our ſouls; but we ſhould doe it ſo, as to find a wholeſome diſpleaſure and regret in beholding our ſelves ſo foul and impure, ſo weak and defectuous, ſo ugly and deformed; if we doe thus, we ſhall not over-love our ſelves.

Some general remedies of Self-love.

1. To reflect upon our ſelves ſeriouſly, and impartially, conſidering our natural nothingneſs, meanneſs, baſeneſs, imperfection, infirmity, unworthineſs: the meanneſs and imperfection of our nature, the defects and deformities of our ſouls, the failings and miſdemeanours of our lives. He that doth this cannot ſurely find himſelf lovely; and muſt therefore take it for very abſurd to dote on himſelf. He will rather be induced to diſlike, deſpiſe, abhor and loath himſelf.

2. To conſider the lovelineſs of other beings ſuperiour to us; comparing them with our ſelves, and obſerving how very far in excellency, worth and beauty they tranſcend us; which if we doe, we muſt appear no fit objects of love, we muſt be checked in our dotage and diverted from this fond affection to our ſelves. It cannot but dazle our eyes, and dull our affections to our ſelves.

If we view the qualities, and examples of other men, who in worth, in wiſedom, in vertue, and piety do far excell us; their noble endowments, their heroical atchievements; what they have done and ſuffered in obedience to God (their ſtrict temperance and auſterity, their laborious induſtry, their ſelf-denial, their patience, *&c.*) how can we but in compariſon deſpiſe and loath our ſelves?

If we conſider the bleſſed Angels and Saints, in glory and bliſs; their purity, their humility, their obedience, how can we think of our ſelves without contempt and abhorrence?

Eſpecially if we contemplate the perfection, the purity, the majeſty of God, how muſt this infinitely debaſe us in our opinion concerning our ſelves, and conſequently diminiſh our fond affection toward things ſo vile and unworthy?

3. To ſtudy the acquiſition and improvement of charity toward God and our neighbour. This will employ and transfer our affections; theſe drawing our ſouls outward, and ſetling them upon other objects will aboliſh or abate the perverſe love toward our ſelves.

4. To conſider, that we doe owe all we are and have to the free bounty and grace of God; hence we ſhall ſee that nothing of eſteem or affection is due to our ſelves; but all to him, who is the fountain and authour of all our good.

5. To direct our minds wholly toward thoſe things which rational ſelf-love requireth us to regard and ſeek: to concern our ſelves in getting vertue, in performing our duty, in promoting our ſalvation, and arriving to happineſs: this will divert us from vanity: a ſober ſelf-love will ſtifle the other fond ſelf-love.

SER-

SERMON XXXII.

Provide things honeſt in the ſight of all Men.

ROM. XII. 17.

Provide things honeſt in the ſight of all Men.

THE World apparently is come to that paſs, that men commonly are afraid or aſhamed of religious practice, hardly daring to own their Maker, by a conſcientious obſervance of his Laws. While profaneneſs and wickedneſs are grown outrageouſly bold, ſo that many *declare their ſin as Sodom*; piety and vertue are become pitifully baſhfull; ſo that how few have the heart and the face openly to maintain a due regard to them; Men in nothing appear ſo reſerved and ſhy, as in avowing their conſcience, in diſcovering a ſenſe of their duty, in expreſſing any fear of God, any love of goodneſs, any concern for their own ſoul. 'Tis wiſedom, as they conceive, to compound with God, and to collude with the World; reſerving for God ſome place in their heart, or yielding unto him ſome private acknowledgment; while in their publick demeanour they conform to the World, in commiſſion of ſin, or neglect of their duty; ſuppoſing, that God may be ſatisfied with the inviſible part of his ſervice, while men are gratified by viſible compliance with their ungratious humours. Iſa. 3. 9.

Such proceeding is built on divers very fallacious, abſurd, and inconſiſtent grounds or pretences; whereby men egregiouſly do abuſe themſelves, and would impoſe on others; namely theſe, and the like:

They would not by a fair ſhew and ſemblance of piety give cauſe to be taken for hypocrites; whereas by diſſembling their conſcience, and ſeeming to *have no fear of God before their eyes*, they incur an hypocriſie, no leſs criminal in nature, but far more dangerous in conſequence, than is that which they pretend to decline.

They would not be apprehended vain-glorious for affecting to ſerve God in the view of men; whereas often at the bottom of their demeanour a moſt wretched and worſe than *Phariſaical* vain-glory doth lie; They forbearing the performance of their duty merely to ſhun the cenſure, or to gain the reſpect of the vileſt and vaineſt perſons.

They would be deemed exceedingly honeſt and ſincere, becauſe forſooth all their piety is cordial, pure, and void of ſiniſter regards to popular eſteem; whereas partial integrity is groſs nonſenſe; whereas no pretence can be more vain, than that we hold a faithfull friendſhip, or hearty reſpect

ſpect for God, whom we openly diſclaim, or diſregard; whereas alſo it is eaſily diſcernible, that although their piety is not, yet their impiety is popular, and affected to ingratiate with men.

They would be taken for men of brave, courageous, and maſculine ſpirits, exalted above the weakneſſes of ſuperſtition and ſcrupuloſity; whereas indeed out of the baſeſt cowardiſe, and a dread to offend ſorry people, they have not a heart to act according to their duty, their judgment, their beſt intereſt.

They would ſeem very modeſt in concealing their vertue; while yet they are moſt impudent in diſcloſing their want of conſcience; while they are ſo preſumptuous toward God, as *to provoke him to his face* by their diſobedience; while they are not aſhamed to wrong and ſcandalize their brethren by their ill behaviour. Iſa. 65. 3. Jer. 6. 17. 8. 12.

They would not be uncivil or diſcourteous in thwarting the mind and pleaſure of their company; as if in the mean time they might be moſt rude toward God in affronting his will and authority; as if any rule of civility could oblige a man to forfeit his ſalvation; as if it were not rather moſt cruel diſcourteſie, and barbarous inhumanity to countenance or encourage any man in courſes tending to his ruine.

They would not be ſingular and uncouth in diſcoſting from the common road, or faſhion of men; As if it were better to leave the common duty, than the common faults of men; as if wiſedom and vertue were ever the moſt vulgar things; as if the way to Heaven were the broadeſt and the moſt beaten way; as if rarity ſhould abate the price of good things; as if conſpiracy in rebellion againſt God might juſtifie or excuſe the fact; as if it were adviſeable to march to Hell in a troop, or comfortable to lie there for ever among the damned crew of aſſociates in wickedneſs.

They cannot endure to be accounted zelots, or *bigots* in religion; As if a man could love or fear God too much; or be over-faithfull and careſull in ſerving him; As if to be moſt earneſt and ſolicitous (not in promoting our own fancies, but) in diſcharging our plain duties could be juſtly reproachable; or were not indeed highly commendable.

Theſe things I may hereafter fully declare; in the mean time it is manifeſt that ſuch a practice is extremely prejudicial to religion and goodneſs; ſo that it may be very uſefull to employ our meditations upon this *Text* of the *Apoſtle*, which directly doth oppoſe and prohibit it.

The ſame *Text* he otherwhere (in his Second *Epiſtle* to the *Corinthians*) doth repeat, in the ſame terms (onely inſerting a clauſe more fully explaining his ſenſe) backing his precept with his own example; for, We (ſaith he there) did ſo manage the buſineſs of collecting and diſpenſing alms, as *to avoid that any man ſhould blame us in this abundance, which is adminiſtred by us; providing for honeſt things, not onely in the ſight of the Lord, but in the ſight of men.* 2 Cor. 8. 21.

The words do imply a precept of very large extent, and touching a great part of our duty; even all thereof which is publick and viſible; for which we are accomptable to the world, whereof man can take any cogniſance; which concerneth all our ſpeech and converſation, all our dealing and commerce, all our deportment relating to humane Society, civil or ſpiritual.

I ſhall firſt a little conſider its meaning and deſign; then I ſhall propoſe reaſons and inducements to its obſervance; then I ſhall declare the folly of thoſe principles and pretences, which obſtruct that obſervance.

I. The

1. The meaning of it is, that we ſhould have a ſpecial care of our external demeanour, and converſation, which cometh under the view and obſervation of men; that it be exempted from any offence or blame, yea that it be comely and commendable.

Ἀμεμπτοι. Phil. 2. 15. Ἀνέγκλητοι. Col. 1. 22.

The terms, in which it is expreſſed, are notably emphatical; We are directed προνοεῖν, *to provide*, to uſe a providence and forecaſt in the caſe: E'er we undertake any deſign, we ſhould deliberate with our ſelves, and conſider on what theatre we ſhall act, what perſons will be ſpectatours, what conceits our practice may raiſe in them, and what influence probably it will have on them. We ſhould not ruſh on into the publick view, with a precipitant raſhneſs, or blind negligence, or contemptuous diſregard, not caring who ſtandeth in our way, who marketh what we doe, what conſequence our proceeding may have on the ſcore of its being publick and viſible: We ſhould adviſe before-hand, lay our buſineſs, and on ſet purpoſe order our behaviour with a regard to thoſe, to whoſe ſight and notice we expoſe it; foreſeeing how our actions may affect, or incline them. So we muſt provide; what things? καλὰ, things fair and handſome; things not only good, innocent, and inoffenſive to the ſight of men; but goodly, pleaſant and acceptable to well-diſpoſed beholders; ſuch as our *Apoſtle* doth otherwhere recommend, when he chargeth us to regard, ὅσα σεμνὰ, *whatever things are venerable*, ὅσα προσφιλῆ, *whatever things are lovely*, ὅσα εὔφημα, *whatever things are of good report*, εἴ τις ἔπαινος---- *whatever things are laudable*; and when he doth exhort us *to walk* εὐσχημόνως, *handſomely* and decently, in a comely garb and faſhion of life: This may add an obligation to ſome things not directly preſcribed by God, which yet may ſerve to adorn religion; but it cannot detract any thing from what God hath commanded; It doth comprehend all inſtances of piety and vertue, practicable before men; it certainly doth exclude all commiſſion of ſin, and omiſſion of duty; for that nothing can be fair or handſome, which is ugly in God's ſight, which doth not ſuit to his holy will.

Phil. 4. 8.

Rom. 13. 13. 1 Theſſ. 4. 12.

Such things we muſt provide, ἐνώπιον πάντων ἀνθρώπων, *before all men*; not onely before ſome men, to whom we bear a particular reſpect, of whom we ſtand in awe, upon whom we have a deſign; but univerſally before all men; as having a due conſideration of all thoſe, upon whom our deportment may have influence; not deſpiſing or diſregarding the obſervation of the meaneſt, or moſt inconſiderable perſon whatever.

But in this practice, to avoid miſapprehenſions, we muſt diſtinguiſh; for it is not required, that we ſhould doe all things openly, nor intended that we ſhould doe any thing vainly; but that we ſhould act conſtantly according to the nature and reaſon of things, with upright and pure intention: The *Apoſtle* doth not mean, that in our practice we ſhould reſemble the *Phariſees*, whom our Lord reproveth for *doing their alms before men*, for loving *to pray ſtanding in the ſynagogues*, for *doing all their works to be ſeen of men*; performing thoſe acts of piety openly *in the corners of the ſtreet*, which ſhould have been done ſecretly *in the cloſet*; and ſo doing them out of vanity, and ambitious deſign, to procure the good opinion and praiſe of men: He doth not intend, that we ſhould aſſume a formal garb of ſingular vertue; that we ſhould aim to ſeem better than we are, counterfeiting any point of religion, or vertue; that we ſhould affect to appear even as good as we are, expoſing all our piety to common view: That we ſhould *ſound a trumpet before us*, making an oſtentation of any good deeds, catching at reputation, or applauſe for

Matt. 6. 1, 5. Matt. 23. 5.

Matt. 6. 2.

for them; that we ſhould doe any commendable thing chiefly to obtain the good opinion of the world, or to eſcape its cenſure; infinitely far it was from the *Apoſtle*'s intention, that we ſhould be *like thoſe whited ſepulchres, which appear beautifull outward, but are within full of dead mens bones and all uncleanneſs*; that is, like thoſe *Phariſees*, who *did outwardly appear righteous, but within were full of hypocriſie, and iniquity:* No; Matt. 23. 27. 28.

In ſome caſes we muſt be reſerved, and keep our vertue cloſe to our ſelves; and ever under a fair ſhew there muſt be a real ſubſtance of good, together with an honeſt intention of heart; a good conſcience muſt always lie at the bottom of a good converſation; the outſide muſt be good, but the beſt ſide muſt be inward; we muſt endeavour to ſanctify our life and converſation, but we muſt eſpecially labour to purify our hearts and affections. Τὸ σεμνὸν ἁπλάστως---- Τὸ εὐφημον ἀνυφαντί. *Ant.* 1. §. 9. 2. §. 5.

Join the precept with others duly limiting it, and it doth import, that with pure ſincerity, and unaffected ſimplicity (void of any ſiniſter, or ſordid deſign) we ſhould in all places, upon all occaſions, in all matters carefully diſcharge that part of our duty which is publick, according to its nature, ſeaſon, and exigency, that is publickly; not abſtaining from the practice of thoſe good deeds, which cannot otherwiſe than openly be well performed; or the conſpicuous performance whereof is abſolutely needfull in regard to God's law and the ſatisfaction of our conſcience, is plainly ſerviceable to the glory of God, is very conducible to the edification of our neighbour, or which may be uſefull to good purpoſes concurrent with thoſe principal ends: We ſhould as *good trees* from a deep root of true piety, in due *ſeaſon* naturally, as it were ſhoot forth good fruits, not onely pleaſant to the ſight, but ſavoury to the taſte, and wholſome for uſe; as St. *Paul*, who, as he ſaith of himſelf, that he *did provide things honeſt in the ſight of all men*, ſo he alſo doth affirm, that *his rejoicing was this, the teſtimony of his conſcience, that in ſimplicity and godly ſincerity---- he had his converſation in the world.* Matt. 7. 17. Luke 6. 44. Pſal. 1. 3. 2 Cor. 8. 21. 2 Cor. 1. 12.

There are indeed ſome duties, or works of piety and vertue, the nature whereof directeth, that in the practice of them we ſhould be reſerved; ſuch as thoſe wherein the world is not immediately concerned, and which may with beſt advantage be tranſacted between God and our own ſouls; as private devotion, meditation on God's word and will, the diſcuſſion of our conſciences, voluntary exerciſes of penitence, and the like; ſuch alſo be thoſe, wherein the intervention or notice of few perſons is required; as deeds of particular charity in diſpenſing alms, good advice, friendly reproof; the which ſort of duties our Lord hath taught us to perform *in ſecret*, or as cloſely as we may; ſtudiouſly keeping our obſervance of them from the eyes of men; thereby aſſuring our ſincerity to our ſelves, and guarding our practice from any taint of vanity, or ſuſpicion of hypocriſie; as alſo in ſome caſes avoiding to cauſe prejudice or offence to our neighbours: *Take heed* (ſaith our Lord) *that ye doe not your alms before men*; and *Thou when thou prayeſt, enter iuto thy cloſet*; and, *Thou when thou faſteſt, anoint thine head, and waſh thy face, that thou appear not unto men to faſt*; and, *If thy brother ſhall treſpaſs againſt thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone.* Ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ. Matt. 6. 4, 6. Matt. 6. 1. Matt. 6. 6. Matt. 6. 17. Matt. 18. 15.

But there are divers other duties, the diſcharge whereof neceſſarily is notorious and viſible; the publick being the ſtage on which they are to be acted; the tranſaction of them demanding the entercourſe of many perſons, who are the objects or inſtruments of them, or are

ſomewiſe concerned in them: Such is that negative duty, of a general
Pſal. 34. 14. nature, and vaſt comprehenſion, which we may call innocence; that is, a total abſtinence from ſin, or forbearance to tranſgreſs any divine com-
Job 1. 1, 2, 3. mand; which is a part of *Job*'s character, *That man was perfect and upright, one that feared God, and eſchewed evil*; the which duty, being to be practiſed at all times in every place, cannot avoid being obſervable.

Such are alſo divers poſitive duties; for ſuch is the profeſſion of our faith in God, and acknowledgment of his heavenly truth, revealed in the
Rom. 10. 10. Goſpel of our Bleſſed *Saviour*; which is ſtyled *confeſſing our Lord before men*, and is (as St. *Paul* telleth us) indiſpenſably requiſite to ſalvation.

Such is joining in that publick adoration, whereby the honour and au-
Pſal. 99. 5. 132. 7. thority of God are upheld in the world, with ſeemly expreſſions of reverence; the which, is to be performed ſolemnly, and (as the Holy *Pſalmiſt*
Pſal. 22. 22. ſpeaketh) *in the midſt of the congregation.*

Such is zeal in vindication of God's honour, when occaſion requireth, from blaſphemous aſperſion, or from ſcandalous offences againſt it.

Such are juſtice, equity, fidelity and ingenuity in our dealings; meekneſs, gentleneſs, patience, kindneſs and courteſie in our converſe; peaceableneſs in our carriage, and charitable beneficence; the objects whereof are moſt
Phil. 4. 5. Tit. 3. 2. general, according to thoſe *Apoſtolical* Precepts, *That our moderation* (or
2 Tim. 2. 24. our equity and ingenuity) *be known unto all men*; that we *ſhew all meek-*
1 Theſſ. 5. 14. *neſs to all men*; that *we muſt not ſtrive*; *but be gentle unto all men*; that we
Heb. 12. 14. be *patient toward all men*; that we *purſue peace with all men*; that *As we*
Rom. 12. 18. Gal. 6. 10. *have opportunity we ſhould doe good unto all men*; ſhould *abound in love one*
1 Theſſ. 3. 12. *towards another, and towards all men*; ſhould ever *follow that which is good*
1 Theſſ. 5. 15. *both among our ſelves, and to all men*; ſhould *liberally diſtribute to the Saints,*
2 Cor. 9. 13. *and to all men*; in performing which ſo general duties, how can a man paſs *incognito*, how can he ſo deal with all men indiſcernibly?

Such are likewiſe gravity and modeſty in our behaviour; ſweetneſs, ſoberneſs, aptneſs to profit and edify the hearers in our diſcourſe; moderation and temperance in our corporeal enjoyments: induſtry in our buſineſs and the works of our calling; integrity in the management of any
2 Tim. 4. 12. office or truſt committed to us; a conſtant practice of which vertues is
Tit. 2. 4, 7. not onely injoined to us as our particular duty, but for publick example.

Such are ſeaſonable defence of the truth, and oppoſing of errour; the commendation of vertue, and reprehenſion of notorious ſin, with the like.

Such things muſt be practiſed, becauſe indiſpenſable duties; but they cannot be done out of ſight, or barring the obſervation of men; they do involve publickneſs; they carry a light and luſtre with them attracting all eyes to regard them; it is as impoſſible to conceal them as to hide the Sun
Matt. 5. 14. from all the world; or to *conceal a city that is ſet upon a hill*; for *nothing* (as St. *Chryſoſtome* ſaith) *doth render a man ſo illuſtrious, although he ten thouſand times would be hid, as an open practice of vertue.*

Wherefore *the works of mercy* (ſaith St. *Auſtin*) *the affection of charity, the ſanctity of godlineſs, the incorruptneſs of chaſtity, the moderation of ſobriety, theſe are perpetually to be held, whether we are in the publick, or at home; whether before men, or in the cloſet, whether we ſpeak, or keep ſilence.*

In the practice of them, 'tis true, we mainly ſhould reſpect the approving our conſcience to God, with expectation of our recompence from him: not being much

Οὐδὲν γὰρ ὕπως ἐπίσημον ἀνθρωπον ποιεῖ, κἂν μυριάκις λαμπρὸν βέλπται, ὡς ἀρετῆς ἐπίδειξις. Chryſ. *in* Matt. 5. 16.

Opera miſericordiæ, affectus charitatis, ſanctitas pietatis, incorruptio caſtitatis, modeſtia ſobrietatis, ſemper hæc tenenda ſunt; ſive cùm in publico ſumus, ſive cùm in domo; ſive ante homines, ſive in cubiculo; ſive loquentes, ſive tacentes. Aug. *in Ep.* 1. Joh. *Tract.* 8.

—non cùm fama ſed cùm rerum natura deliberandum eſt. Sen. *Ep.* 81.

much concerned in the judgment, or pleaſure of men; purely conſidered in themſelves; not aiming at any intereſt of credit or profit from them, as a reward of our work; *We ought* (as St. *Auſtin* ſaith) while we doe good, *to be ſeen, but we ought not to doe it, that we may be ſeen; the end of our joy, the bound of our comfort ſhould not be there; ſo that we ſhould think our ſelves to have obtained the whole fruit of a good work, when we have been ſeen and commended:* No, *whatever we doe*, we ſhould (as the *Apoſtle* directeth) doe it, *as the ſervants of Chriſt, doing the will of God from the heart; doing it heartily as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord we ſhall receive the reward of the inheritance.* 1 Cor. 4. 3. 1 Theſſ. 2 4, 5. Gal. 1. 10. *Si times ſpectatores non habebis imitatores; debes ergò videri, ſed non ad hoc debes facere, ut videaris, non ibi debet eſſe finis gaudii tui, non ibi terminus lætitiæ tuæ, ut putes te totum fructum conſecutum eſſe boni operis, cùm viſus fueris atque laudatus.* Ibid. Eph. 6. 6. Col. 3. 23, 24.

Yet nothing in the mean time ſhould hinder us from performing ſuch neceſſary duties; ſtrictly and exactly, with our moſt diligent care and endeavour, even in that light, which their nature doth carry in it.

How much ſoever of our vertue or piety out of humility, or modeſty we may conceal; yet we muſt be carefull of diſcovering any vice, or irreligion; either by notoriouſly committing any thing forbidden by God, or omitting any thing commanded by him.

This we ſhould not doe upon any terms, upon any pretence whatever; No wicked faſhion ſhould engage us, no bad example ſhould inveagle us, no favour of men ſhould allure us, no terrour ſhould ſcare us thereto; we ſhould not out of fear, out of ſhame, out of complaiſance, out of affected prudence, or politick deſign; out of deference to the quality, dignity, or authority of any perſon; out of regard to any man's deſire, or pleaſure; We ſhould not to decline offence, envy, blame, reproach, ill-treatment, or upon any ſuch accompt, comply in any ſinfull practice, wave any duty, neglect any ſeaſon of performing a good deed, whereby we may glorify God, or edify our neighbour, or promote the welfare of our own ſoul.

To ſuch a practice, according to the intent of St. *Paul*'s injunction, we are obliged; and thereto we may be induced by divers conſiderations; particularly by thoſe which we ſhall now propoſe.

1. We may conſider, that the publick is the proper, natural, and due place of goodneſs; It ſhould dwell in the light, it ſhould walk freely and boldly every-where, it ſhould expoſe it ſelf to open view, that it may receive from rational creatures its due approbation, reſpect and praiſe; it by publickneſs is advanced, and the more it doth appear, the more beautifull, the more pleaſant, the more uſefull it is; yielding the fair luſtre, the greater influence, the better effects; thereby diffuſing and propagating it ſelf, becoming exemplary, inſtructive and admonitive; drawing lovers and admirers to it; exciting and encouraging men to embrace it; wherefore it is very abſurd that it ſhould ſculk or ſneak; it is a great damage to the publick, that it ſhould retire from common notice. *Bona conſcientia prodire vult & conſpici, ipſas nequitia tenebras timet.* Sen. *Ep.* 27.

On the other hand, it is proper for wickedneſs never to appear, or to ſhew its head in view; it ſhould be confined to darkneſs and ſolitude, under guard of its natural keepers, ſhame and fear; it ſhould be extirminated from all converſation among rational creatures, and baniſhed to the infernal ſhades; Publickneſs doth augment and aggravate it; the more it is ſeen, the more ugly, the more loathſome, the more noxious it is; its odious ſhape being diſcloſed, its noiſome ſteams being diſperſed, its peſtilent effects being conveyed thereby. *Omne malum aut timore aut pudore natura perfudit.* Tert. *Apol. cap.* 1. Job 24. 13---17.

Rom. 13. 12. Eph 5. 11. Wherefore to ſmother vertue (that fair child of light) in privacy, and to vent ſin (*the works of darkneſs*) openly, is quite to tranſplace things out of their natural ſituation and order; according to which we are taught by our *Lord*, that *He that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be manifeſt*; and by St. *Paul*, that *Every one, who doeth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh he to the light, leſt his deeds ſhould be reproved*; So indeed it is, and will be, where conſcience retaineth its due ſway and force; where a due reſpect and reverence are preſerved for goodneſs.

John 3. 21. Eph. 5. 13.

As that any good cometh from detection of ſin, is an accidental advantage; ſo that any miſchief doth ever follow the manifeſtation of vertue, is an unnatural abuſe; the which may well be prevented; There can be no danger of acting any good moſt evidently, if we do withall act ſincerely, having purified our hearts from diſhoneſt intention, and from ambitious vanity; the fear of which ſhould not wholly drive vertue under the hatches, and bring vice upon the ſtage. But

2. We ſhould conſider, that we cannot really, in any competent or tolerable meaſure, be good men, without approving our ſelves ſuch in our converſation before men.

Whatever may be pretended, it commonly doth happen, and it ever is to be ſuſpected that the inviſible piety, which is not accompanied with viſible conſcientiouſneſs, is falſe, or is no piety at all; or that they who have little care and conſcience to ſerve God publickly, have much leſs to ſerve him privately; or that ſuch as betray a ſcandalous negligence of their ways, will hardly maintain a carefull watch over their hearts; for the ſame cauſes (be it profane infidelity, or looſeneſs of principles, or ſupine incogitancy, or ſloth, or ſtupidity) which diſpoſe them to diſregard God and his laws before the world, more effectually will incline them to neglect God, and forget their duty by themſelves, where beſide their own conſcience, there is no witneſs, no judge, no cenſor to encourage, or reproach them: But admit it poſſible, and put caſe, that ſometimes the heart and converſation may not run parallel; that a man may better govern his interiour thoughts and affections, than he doth manage his exteriour behaviour and actions, that a man ſecretly may cleave to God, although he ſeemeth openly to deſert him; yet this will not ſuffice to conſtitute, or denominate a man good; becauſe much of goodneſs, as we have ſhewed, even the nobler half thereof (that part, whereby God is moſt glorified, and whereby the world is moſt benefited) doth lie in open and viſible practice; that vertue therefore muſt be very imperfect, that obedience muſt be very lame, which is deficient in ſo great a part.

Jam. 2. 10.

As there can be no fair pretence to goodneſs, where ſo little thereof is conſpicuous; ſo there can be no real integrity thereof, where ſo much of duty is wanting.

Luke 6. 44. Jam. 2. 18. Our Lord hath taught us, that *Every tree is known by its fruit*; and, St. *James* ſaith, that *faith is ſhewed by works*; and ſo it is, that a man can hardly be good in any reaſonable degree without appearing ſuch; Impiety may, but piety cannot be quite concealed; As gold may be counterfeited (for all is not gold that gliſtereth) yet true gold always doth look like gold; ſo although bad men ſometimes may ſeem good, yet good men alſo muſt ſeem ſuch, appearing in their own native temper and luſtre.

Goodneſs cannot be diſguiſed in the ſhape of evil, becauſe ſimplicity and innocence are eſſential ingredients of it; any mixture of notorious ſin, any viſible neglect of duty aſſuring (yea formerly making) a want of

of it, or a real defect therein; It may be daubed with falſe aſperſions, it may be dimmed by the breath of unjuſt, and uncharitable cenſures; but wiping them off, its natural hue certainly will appear.

Wherefore if we would ſatisfy our ſelves in our own conſciences, or juſtify our ſelves to others, that we are truly good, we muſt (without partiality, or diſtinguiſhing between publick and private) like the Holy *Pſalmiſt*, *have reſpect unto all God's commandments*; we like *Zachary* and *Elizabeth* muſt *walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameleſs*; we muſt like *David accompliſh God's will*; we muſt obſerve St. *Paul's* rule, *to abſtain, ἀπὸ παντὸς εἴδους πονηροῦ, from* both *every kind of evil, and every bad appearance.* But farther, (Numb. 15. 39, 40.) Pſal. 119. 6. Luke 1. 6. Ποιεῖν πάντα τὰ θελήματα μου. Acts 13. 22. 1 Theſſ. 5. 23.

3. A great care of our good behaviour before men is neceſſary in regard to Almighty God; whoſe juſt intereſt is preſerved, whoſe due homage is payed, whoſe honour is promoted thereby; the ſame being greatly prejudiced and impaired by the contrary defailance.

It is a clear point of juſtice toward God, as to render all obedience to him, ſo particularly that which conſiſteth in an open acknowledgment and ſervice of him; for as he made and doth preſerve not onely the heart, but the tongue, the members, the whole man, ſo all muſt concur in rendring their tribute of reverence and ſervice to him. Rom. 12. 1.

The *Apoſtle* doth preſcribe, that *whatever we doe, we ſhould doe all to the glory of God*; and well he might, ſeeing that to glorify God is indeed to execute the main deſign of our creation, to apply our faculties to their beſt uſe, to atchieve the moſt proper and moſt excellent work, whereof we are capable; to doe that, which is the worthieſt and happieſt employment of Angels, which all the company of Heaven with moſt ardent deſire, with moſt zealous ambition, with reſtleſs endeavour doth purſue: And this we cannot better, we cannot otherwiſe doe, than by an apparent good converſation. For, 1 Cor. 10. 31.

He that apparently in all his actions maketh conſcience of obeying God's laws, thereby doth evidence his firm perſuaſion concerning the exiſtence and providence of God, doth adhere to him againſt all adverſaries of piety, and all temptations to rebellion; doth avow his ſovereign Majeſty and Authority; doth yield him due veneration and obedience; doth ſhew right apprehenſions of him, and juſt affections towards him; implying that he doth moſt highly eſteem him, doth moſt heartily love him, doth chiefly dread him, doth repoſe his truſt and hope in him for all his happineſs; hath a great opinion of his wiſedom, a great awe of his power, a great ſenſe of his goodneſs; the which practice is in it ſelf a direct and formal glorification of God, in his own perſon.

He alſo thereby doth farther promote the glory of God, inſtructing, exciting, and encouraging others to the like practice of deferring reſpect and ſervice to God; for naturally men have ſuch a capacity, ſuch aptitude, ſuch proclivity to religion (or to the acknowledgment and worſhip of their Maker) that when they behold others ſeriouſly and earneſtly purſuing it, they are eaſily drawn to conſpire therein; eſpecially thoſe, who are not utterly perverted, and corrupted by ill cuſtome.

And whereas good converſation hath a native beauty affecting beholders with delight, whereas the fruits of vertue have a pleaſing ſweetneſs gratefull to all who taſte them; men from that ſight and that ſenſe, will preſently be moved to commend the wiſedom, and to bleſs the goodneſs of him, who was pleaſed to inſtitute ſo excellent a religion, to enact ſo beneficial

Ἀρετῆς ἄσκησις τίμιον μὲν κτῆμα τοῖς ἔχουσι, ἥδιστον δὲ θέαμα τοῖς ὁπωσοῦν χαίνουσι. Baſ. Ep. 42.

Ὅταν δὲ ἄπιστος, &c. Chryſ. ἀνδρ. θ. (*p.* 524.)

beneficial laws, to preſcribe ſo wholſome duties to us: For, *when* (ſaith the moſt divine *Father*) *an Infidel ſhall ſee thee a believer to be* κατεσταλμένον---- *ſtaunch, ſober, orderly, he will be aſtond, and will ſay, in truth great is the God of Chriſtians: What men hath he made? what perſons out of what perſons hath he made them? how from men hath he made them Angels? If one abuſe them, they do not rail; if one ſmite them, they do not reſent; if one injure them, they pray for him that doeth the offence; they know not to remember ill turns, they skill not to be vain, they have not learnt to lie, they cannot abide to forſwear, or rather to ſwear at all, but ſooner would chuſe to have their tongue cut out, than to let an oath ſlip out of their mouth.*

So may we really glorify God; and otherwiſe than by open practice we cannot doe it; for glory doth require a publick ſtage; it implying (as *Seneca* ſaith) *the conſent of many worthy perſons* declaring their eſteem; it being, as *Cicero* defineth it, *the agreeing praiſe of good men, with an incorrupted vote judging well of an excellent vertue.*

Gloria conſenſum multorum exigit— Conſentire in hoc plures inſignes & præſtantes viri debent, ut claritas ſit. Sen. *Ep.* 102.

Gloria eſt conſentiens laus bonorum in corrupta voce benè judicantium de excellente virtute. Cic. 3 *Tuſc. init.*

Gloria eſt frequens de aliquo fama cum laude. Cic. *de Inv.* 2. 39.

Wherefore toward our being enabled to glorify God, two things muſt concur; that we be good men, and that we be openly ſuch.

That we be good men, becauſe otherwiſe our commendation will have no worth, or weight; for *praiſe is not comely in the mouth of ſinners*; It is no ornament to be commended by ill men, to whoſe words little regard is due, little truſt can be given.

Non eſt ſpecioſa laus in ore peccatorii. Eccluſ. 15. 9.

That we be good openly, avowing God in practice conducing to his honour; otherwiſe no glory can accrue to him from our goodneſs; We may ſerve God, and pleaſe him in private; but we cannot by that ſervice glorify him; at leaſt at preſent and here in this world: It is true the cloſeſt piety will yield glory to God at the laſt, when *our Lord ſhall come to be glorified in his Saints, and admired in them that believe*; but to deſign ſuch a future glorification of God is not enough; it is our duty to glorify God now, that we may be rewarded for it, aud that he may requite us with glory hereafter.

2 Theſſ. 1. 10.

Pſal. 50. 23.

God himſelf telleth us in the *Pſalm, Whoſo offereth praiſe, he glorifieth me*; and how can praiſe be offered, or to what purpoſe will it be offered otherwiſe than apparently, either in word or deed, by oral or by real expreſſion, to the ears, or to the eyes of men, ſo as to occaſion in them the production of worthy conceptions and due affections toward God? In ſuch a manner the *Holy man* did offer it, who ſaid, *I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midſt of the congregation I will praiſe thee; I will praiſe the Lord with my whole heart, in the aſſembly of the upright, and in the congregation*; He did it ſometimes with his mouth, which is a notable part of our converſation; but we may doe it continually by our life; for, *He* (ſaith St. *Auſtin*) *who praiſeth God with his tongue, cannot doe that always; but he that praiſeth God by his manners, can always doe it.*

Pſal. 22. 22. Pſal. 111. 1. 107. 32. 109. 30.

Qui Deum laudat lingua, non ſemper poteſt; qui moribus Deum laudat, ſemper poteſt. Aug. *in* 1 *Ep.* Joh. Tr. 8.

This motive is by the great *Maſters* of our Chriſtian practice frequently urged; for

Saint *Paul* wiſheth the *Philippians to be filled with the fruits of righteouſneſs, which are by Jeſus Chriſt, unto the praiſe and glory of God*; He prayeth for the *Theſſalonians*, that *God would fulfil all the good pleaſure of his goodneſs, and the work of faith with power, that the name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*

Phil. 1. 11.

2 Theſſ. 1. 11,——

Chriſt might be glorified in them; He particularly doth incite the *Corinthians* to works of charity, that *by that miniſtration* men might be induced to *glorify God*, rendring him thankfull praiſe for their beneficial obedience. 2 Cor. 9. 11,-- 13.

St. *Peter* likewiſe doth exhort all Chriſtians *to have their converſation honeſt among the Gentiles, that they might by their good works, which they ſhould behold, glorify God, in the day of viſitation*, (that is perhaps, when they carefully do view, and reflect on them.) 1 Pet. 2. 12 Ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἐπισκοπῆς.

Our *Lord* himſelf thus chargeth his Diſciples, *Let your light ſo ſhine before men, that they may ſee your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven*; they did obſerve his command, and the effect did follow, many being converted to God no leſs by the radiant integrity of their life, than by the perſuaſive efficacy of their doctrine: and, *In this* (ſaith our *Lord* again) *is my father glorified, if ye bear much fruit*; what fruit was that? what but of good works viſible to the eye, and perceptible to the taſte; otherwiſe how could men thence find cauſe to glorify God? Matt. 5. 16. Chryſ. John 15. 8.

In fine, this is declared to be the peculiar deſign of our Religion, or of the whole Chriſtian Inſtitution; to this end we are made *a choſen generation, a royal prieſthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that we ſhould ſhew forth the praiſes* (or vertues) *of him, who hath called us out of darkneſs to his marvellous light*; not onely by our profeſſion, but in our practice, declaring his goodneſs. 1 Pet. 2. 9.

On the other hand, by ſtifling our vertue and conſcience, in an open compliance with ſin, or neglect of our duty, we greatly ſhall diſhonour God; for thereby in effect we deny him, and deſert him; we injure his Majeſty and diſclaim our allegiance to him; we intimate our mean opinion of him, and ſmall affection to him; we betray our want of reverence to his excellency, of dread to his greatneſs, of love to his goodneſs; of hope in his promiſes, and gratious overtures of mercy; of fear in regard to his ſevere juſtice, and fierce menaces; So immediately we diſhonour him, and we thereby alſo do countenance diſreſpect and diſobedience to him; And our behaviour tendeth to produce, or to confirm the like irreligious diſpoſitions of mind, and impious practices in others; ſo that with horrible diſingenuity we croſs the deſign of our creation, and violate our greateſt obligations toward our Maker. Tit. 1. 16.

Indeed what greater affront, or more heinous indignity can we offer to God, than openly before the world *by* the moſt real expreſſion of *our works to deny* and diſown *him*; than to be notoriouſly aſhamed, or afraid to avow him for our Lord and Maſter; than to expreſs no ſenſe of our duty to him, no reverence of his authority, no gratitude for his benefits to us; than viſibly to prefer any other conſideration or worldly advantage before a regard to his will and pleaſure? Tit. 1. 16.

In this open ſin doth outgo private wickedneſs, and putteth down even the worſt hypocriſie (beſide its own) that it not onely offendeth God, but ſorely woundeth his honour, and expoſeth his glorious name to contempt; by which conſideration ſuch miſcarriages are frequently aggravated in Holy Scripture; So in the Prophets God complaineth of his people, for having by their ſcandalous crimes *profaned his holy name among the heathen*; ſo St. *Paul* expoſtulateth with the *Jew*, *Thou that boaſteſt of the law, through breaking the law diſhonoureſt thou God?* ſo *Nathan* told *David*, that God would puniſh him, *becauſe by his bad deed he had given great occaſion to the enemies of the Lord to blaſpheme.* But Ezek. 36. 21—— Iſa. 52. 2. Rom. 2. 23. 2 Sam. 12. 14.

4. We

4. We ſhould be carefull of our good behaviour in the ſight of men, that we may thereby maintain the dignity and repute of our Chriſtian Profeſſion, which by our naughty or negligent demeanour will be much diſparaged and diſgraced.

Moſt evident it is to reaſon, that a viſible practice, conformable to the rules of our Religion, cannot otherwiſe than exceedingly commend, and grace it; for how can the goodneſs of a rule more ſurely obtain its due commendation, than from its being applied to obſervable practice and experience.

Aſſuredly charity, meekneſs, humility, patience, ſobriety, diſcretion, and all Chriſtian vertues as in themſelves they are very aimable and venerable to all men, as they yield great benefit and much pleaſure to thoſe, whom their conſequences do touch; ſo they do ingratiate the law which preſcribeth them, they bring eſteem to the principles, whence they are derived;

Rom. 14. 18. *He* (as the *Apoſtle* ſaith) *that in theſe things ſerveth Chriſt, is* both *acceptable to God, and approved of men*, as the follower of a moſt excellent rule.

We may alſo conſider, that a conſpicuous practice, according to our Religion, is a demonſtrative proof, that we do ſeriouſly and firmly embrace it, or that we are heartily and ſteadily perſuaded of its truth; which is no ſmall credit to any profeſſion, arguing that it hath a good foundation in reaſon, apt to bottom and ſuſtain a ſolid faith.

And as thereby we pregnantly do evidence, that we our ſelves do highly value the noble privileges, the excellent promiſes, the precious rewards exhibited in the Goſpel; ſo we thereby do breed a like eſteem in others; upon whom the authority of men apparently vertuous and conſcientious infallibly will have a forcible influence.

Such a practice will have a great ſtroke toward evincing the truth and reality, the perfect excellency, the notable ſtrength and efficacy of our Religion; plainly ſhewing, that it is not a mere name, an idle pretence, a weak fancy, a dry ſpeculation, a chimærical dream; but a vigorous and maſculine principle, able to produce moſt worthy fruits of ſubſtantial goodneſs, *profitable to men*; conducible to our own welfare, and to the benefit of others.

As gallant actions, becoming a noble rank, elevated above the vulgar level do illuſtrate and dignify nobility it ſelf; ſo doth a worthy converſation, beſeeming our high ſtation in the heavenly Kingdom, our near alliances to God, thoſe ſplendid titles and glorious privileges aſſigned to every faithfull Chriſtian in the Evangelical Charter, render our ſtate admirable, and make it ſeem an excellent advantage to be a Chriſtian.

Hence in the *Apoſtolical* Writings an obſervance of the Evangelical Laws is ſo much and often enforced by this conſideration; for upon this accompt we are exhorted to a carefull diſcharge of our duty, that *we may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things*; We are urged *to have our converſation worthy of the Goſpel*; to *walk worthy of the vocation, wherewith we are called*, to behave our ſelves *as worthily becometh Saints* (that is, perſons inſtituted in ſo holy a Religion, and deſigned to ſo peculiar excellency in vertue) to *walk as children of the light*, (that is, of truth and knowledge revealed from Heaven) to *walk worthy of God, who hath called us unto his kingdom and glory*; *worthy of the Lord*, *unto all well-pleaſing*, *being fruitfull in every good work*; the which enforcements of duty do imply a viſible practice, producing the viſible effects of ornament and credit to our Religion, recommending it to the minds and conſciences of men.

Tit. 2. 10. Phil. 1. 27. Eph. 4. 1. Eph. 5. 3. Rom. 16. 2. Eph. 5. 8. 1 Theſſ. 2. 12. Col. 1. 10.

Con-

Contrariwiſe, the defect of good converſation before men in Chriſtians, is upon divers accompts diſgracefull to our Religion. For,

It tempteth men to judge, that we our ſelves do not heartily believe its truth, or value its worth; That we do not approve its doctrine for reaſonable, or take its advantages for conſiderable; or deem the name and ſtate of a Chriſtian to be honourable; ſeeing we are not concerned to own them, or do not care to engage our reputation in avowing and abetting them in that way, which doth beſt ſignifie our mind and meaning: for men certainly will judge of our ſenſe not ſo much by what we ſay, as from what we doe; not by our verbal profeſſion or pretence, but from our practice, as the ſureſt indication of our heart.

Εἰ δέ τις ἐλεγχθῇ σεσέξας τι ἄτοπον, ὁ πιστῷ ὢ μόνον ἑαυτὸν ἔβλαψεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ βλασφημίαν σεσοίτειφε τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ. *Const. Ap.* 2. 8.

Wherefore when they hear us to confeſs our faith, and ſee us act like Infidels, they will be forced to eſteem us either for ſubdolous hypocrites, or for inconſiſtent fools; who aſſume the name of Chriſtians, and pretend to great advantages thence, yet in effect do not mind, or regard them; highly commending the rules of our Religion, but not at all obſerving them; greatly admiring the example of our Saviour, but not caring to imitate it; deſcribing Heaven for a moſt happy place, but not ſtriving to get thither, in the ſole way, which our Lord preſcribeth, of faithfull and diligent obedience to his precepts;

Seeing, I ſay, this repugnance between our profeſſion and our practice, will induce men to charge us with hypocriſie and folly; and if the Profeſſours be taken for counterfeits or fools, the profeſſion it ſelf will hardly ſcape from being held impoſture, or folly.

Our Religion at leaſt will thence be expoſed to the cenſures of being no better than a fond device, and a barren notion, unpractible, ineffectual, and inſignificant to any good purpoſe.

The viſible misbehaviour, I ſay, of Chriſtians will aſſuredly derive obloquy and reproach on Chriſtianity, if not as bad, yet as vain, impotent, impertinent and uſeleſs; eſpecially thoſe who are diſaffected to it, will hence take advantage to inſult upon it with contemptuous ſcorn; to what, will they ſay, do your fine rules ſerve? what effects do your glorious hopes produce? where are the fruits of that holy faith, and heavenly doctrine, which you ſo extoll and magnifie?

Whereas alſo bad converſation commonly doth not onely deprive men of the benefits which our Religion promiſeth, but doth carry with it hurtfull fruits; men that ſee or feel them will be apt to impute them to Religion:

If a Chriſtian be unjuſt, cenſorious, factious, any-wiſe offenſive or troubleſome, although irreligion be the cauſe of ſuch things, yet Religion muſt bear the blame, and they preſently exclaim,

Quantum religio potuit ſuadere malorum.

Whence St. *Paul* (who was a powerfull inſtructor doth impreſs matters of duty by the moſt proper motives) doth often, and upon all occaſions urge this conſideration; He chargeth us *to give no offence in any thing, that the miniſtery* (or Evangelical diſpenſation) *be not blamed*, or expoſed to the cenſure of any captious *Momus*; He biddeth us to forbear harſh judgment, and all uncharitable dealing, that *our good be not evil ſpoken of*; He preſſeth the diſcharge of our duty in each calling and relation, that by neglect thereof the Goſpel be not defamed; *Let* (ſaith he) *as many ſervants as are under the yoke, count their own Maſters worthy of*

2 Cor. 6. 3. Ἵνα μὴ μωμηθῇ.

Rom. 14. 16.

1 Tim. 6. 1.

all honour, that the name of God, and his doctrine be not blaſphemed: and, Tit. 2. 5. *Let women be diſcreet, chaſt, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own huſ-* 1 Tim. 5. 14. *bands, that the word of God be not blaſphemed;* and, *I will that younger women marry, bear children, guide the houſe,* (ſo as) *to give no occaſion to the adverſary* (that is, to perſons diſaffected to Chriſtianity) *to ſpeak reproachfully* (of it:) which diſcourſe by clear parity of reaſon may be applied to any other ſtate, or relation.

Now ſeriouſly what greater miſchief can we doe, what heavier guilt may we contract, than by working diſhonour to God's adorable name, than by caſting reproach on God's heavenly truth, than by drawing a ſcandal on that holy Religion, which the Son of God came down from Heaven to eſtabliſh; for the glory of God and ſalvation of mankind? Surely next after directly blaſpheming God, and defying Religion with Rom. 2. 24. δι' ὑμᾶς. our own mouths, the next crime is to make others to doe ſo, or in effect to doe it by their profane tongues.

There remain divers arguments of very great moment, which the time will not ſuffer me to urge; and therefore I muſt reſerve them to another occaſion.

SERMON XXXIII.

Provide things honeſt in the ſight of all Men.

ROM. XII. 17.

Provide things honeſt in the ſight of all Men.

I Have formerly diſcourſed upon this Apoſtolical Precept; and having declared the meaning of it (briefly, importing, that we ſhould have a ſpecial care of our external behaviour, coming under the view and obſervation of men, that it be perfectly innocent and inculpable.) I did propoſe divers motives inducing to the obſervance of it; but divers others of great importance the time would not allow me to urge; I ſhall therefore now proceed to offer them to your conſideration.

I did then ſhew that a regard to the reaſon and nature of things, to the ſatisfaction of our conſcience, to the honour of God, and to the credit of our Religion, did require from us a good converſation before men; I now farther add, that,

I. The

I. The real intereſt of piety ad vertue do exact ſuch a converſation, as the moſt effectual way of upholding, advancing and propagating them among men.

Example is a very powerfull thing either way; both for attraction to good, and ſeduction to evil; ſuch is the nature of men, that they are more apt to be guided by the practice of others, than by their own reaſon, and more eaſily can write after a copy, than by a rule; that they are prone to imitate whatever they ſee done, be it good or bad, convenient or inconvenient, profitable or hurtfull, emulating the one, and aping the other; that they love to be in the faſhion, and will go anywhither in company, preſuming of ſupport, defence and comfort therein; that they will ſatisfie their minds, and juſtifie their doings by any authority, deeming that laudable or allowable, or at leaſt tolerable and excuſable, for which they can alledge precedents; judging that if they are not ſingular, they are innocent, or however not very culpable; that hardly they will undertake any thing without countenance, whereby their modeſty is in ſome meaſure ſecured, and partners engaged to bear a ſhare with them in the cenſure, to which their deportment is liable. Hence a viſible good converſation will have a great efficacy toward the promotion and propagation of goodneſs; the authority of that being adjoined to the native worth and beauty, to the rational plauſibility, to the ſenſible benefit of vertue, will cogently draw men to it; it will be a clear pattern, whereby they ſhall be informed what they are obliged, and what they are able to perform; it will be a notable ſpur ſmartly exciting them to mind and purſue their duty; it will be a vigorous incentive, inflaming their courage, and provoking an emulation to doe well.

The viſible ſuccour and countenance of many, eſpouſing the cauſe of goodneſs by their practice, will aſſuredly bring it into requeſt and vogue, and thence into current uſe and faſhion; ſo juſt a cauſe cannot fail to proſper, having any reaſonable forces to maintain it; it will have great ſtrength, great boldneſs and aſſurance, when a conſiderable party doth appear engaged on its ſide.

Yea ſometimes even the example of a few will doe it great ſervice; the rarity giving a ſpecial luſtre to their vertue, and rendring it more notable; according to that intimation of the *Apoſtle*; when he thus doth exhort the *Philippians* to a chearfull and forward practice of goodneſs; *Doe all things* (ſaith he) *without murmurings and diſputings; that ye may be blameleſs and harmleſs, the ſons of God, without rebuke in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe generation, among whom ye ſhine as lights in the world.* Phil. 2. 14,15.

A good converſation doth notifie good men to one another, and draweth them together, and combineth them in a party, for the protection of goodneſs, heartning and aiding one another therein.

Such advantages goodneſs doth always need; for it ever hath in the world many adverſaries, ſtriving by violent force to beat it down, or by treacherous fraud to ſupplant it; who uſe their authority and intereſt to ſuppreſs it; who by their evil example do ſeduce from it; who labour by detraction to blaſt it, by ſcorn and reproach to diſcourage it, by divers temptations and baits to entice from it; who combining their forces with the wicked Spirits, and with the corrupt inclinations of men, do raiſe a mighty party for wickedneſs.

Wherefore, to balance ſuch oppoſitions, goodneſs doth need friends to maintain it; not onely friends in heart, or ſecret well-wiſhers; but open friends, who frankly will avow it, and both in word and deed will ſtoutly abet it.

A demure, baſhfull, timorous friendſhip will rather prejudice, than help it; for nothing will more animate its foes to aſſail and perſecute it, than obſerving its friends to ſlink and ſneak; When good men hide their faces, as if they were aſhamed of their goodneſs, then bad men will grow more impudent, and inſolent in their outrages againſt it.

Wherefore if we would have goodneſs hold up its head, we muſt openly take its part; if we would not be guilty of its ruine, we muſt ſtand up to uphold it; for whoever openly complieth with ſin, or neglecteth his duty, may well be charged with its ruine; ſince if thou ſo deſerteſt goodneſs, another after thy pattern may doe the like, and a third may follow him; ſo the neglect of it may ſoon be propagated, until at length it may be quite abandoned, and left deſtitute of ſupport; If it doth not thus happen, it will as to thee be accidental, and no thanks to thee for its better fortune.

The declenſion of piety is not perhaps more to be aſcribed to any other cauſe, than to this, than that men who approve goodneſs in their hearts, are ſo backward to ſhew it in their practice; that good men do ſo affect retirement, and wrapping up their vertue in obſcurity; that moſt men think it enough if in the cauſe of Religion againſt profaneneſs and diſſoluteneſs they appear *neuters*, and do not impugn it: for if in a time of infection all ſound men do ſhut up themſelves, and all ſick men walk abroad, how neceſſarily muſt the plague reign in the place?

II. Charity toward our neighbour demandeth from us a great care of our converſation before men.

The law of Charity, which is the great law of Chriſtianity, doth oblige us earneſtly to further our neighbour's good of all kinds, eſpecially that, which is incomparably his beſt good, the welfare of his ſoul; which how can we better doe, than by attracting him to the performance of his duty to God, and by withdrawing him from the commiſſion of ſin? And how can we doe that without an apparently good converſation, or without plainly declaring, as occaſion ſheweth, for vertue, both in word and deed? how can a ſhy reſervedneſs conduce to that end? what will inviſible thoughts or affections of heart confer thereto?

Rom. 14. 19. 1 Cor. 14. 26. 'Tis a precept of charity, that we ſhould *purſue things, wherewith one may edifie another*; and how can we perform that duty, without imparting our mind, and as it were transfuſing it into others; ſo as by converting them from errour and ſin, by inſtilling good principles, by exciting good reſolutions, to lay in them a foundation of goodneſs, or by cheriſhing and improving the ſame to rear a ſtructure of vertue in them? how can we mutually edifie without mutually adviſing vertue, exhorting to it, recommending and impreſſing it by our exemplary behaviour?

Παρακαλεῖτε ἀλλήλους. 1 Theſſ. 5. 11. Heb. 10. 24. Εἰς παροξυσμόν. The *Apoſtles* do injoin, that we ſhould *exhort one another, and edifie one another*; that we ſhould *conſider one another, to provoke* (or to whet and inſtigate one another) *to love, and to good works*; the which can no-wiſe be performed, without expreſly declaring for goodneſs and remarkables acting in its behalf; To commend and preſs it by word is a part of our duty; but not all of it, nor ſufficient to this purpoſe; eſpecially ſeeing we cannot urge that with good confidence, nor ſhall be held ſerious in pleading for it, which we do not our ſelves embrace in practice; for how can we expect, that our reaſon ſhould convince others, when it doth not appear really to have perſuaded our ſelves; when our doings evidently do argue the weakneſs of our diſcourſe?

Words

Words hardly will ever move without practice, although practice ſometimes will perſuade without words; according to that of St. *Peter*; *Ye wives be in ſubjection to your own husbands, that if any obey not the word, they may without the word be won by the converſation of the wives, while they behold your chaſt converſation coupled with fear* (or due reverence to them.) 1 Pet. 3. 1.

Again, We are frequently commanded to ſhun *the giving any offence*; or *the putting a ſtumbling-block, or an occaſion to fall in the way of our brother*; that is, to doe any thing, which any-wiſe may confer to his incurring any ſin; the which precepts are violated not onely by poſitive and active influence, by propoſing erroneous doctrine, evil advice, fraudulent enticements to ſin, or diſcouragements from duty; but alſo by withholding the means, ſerving to prevent his tranſgreſſion; ſuch as a tacit indulgence, or connivence, when good admonition may reclaim him; the omiſſion of good example, when it is ſeaſonable, and probably may prove efficacious; for theſe neglects have a moral cauſality, inducing or encouraging the commiſſion of ſin; our ſilence, our forbearing to act, our declining fair opportunities to guide him into the right way will be taken for ſigns of approbation, and conſent; and conſequently as arguments to juſtifie or to excuſe bad practice, in proportion to the authority and eſteem we have; which ever will be ſome in this caſe, when they favour the infirmity of men. 1 Cor. 10. 32. 8. 9. 2 Cor. 6. 3. Rom. 14. 13.

Charity doth farther oblige us, upon juſt cauſe, and in due ſeaſon, to check and reprove our neighbour miſdemeaning himſelf; for, *Warn the diſorderly*, ſaith the *Apoſtle*; and, *Have no fellowſhip* (ſaith he) *with the unfruitfull works of darkneſs, but rather reprove them*; and, *Thou ſhalt not* (ſaith the *Law*) *hate thy brother in thy heart, thou ſhalt in any-wiſe rebuke thy neighbour, and not ſuffer ſin upon him*; where forbearance of reproof is implied to ſhew not onely a defect of charity, but hatred of our brother; and a good reaſon is intimated for it, becauſe in ſo doing, we ſuffer ſin to lie upon him; not hindring his progreſs in it, not endeavouring his converſion from it; but reproof is an overt act; involving ſomewhat of openneſs and plain freedom, ſuch as the *Wiſeman* doth prefer before cloſe good-will; for, *Open rebuke* (ſaith he) *is better than ſecret love.* 1 Theſſ. 5. 14. Eph. 5. 11. Levit. 19. 17. Prov. 22. 5.

We are all thus far *the keepers of our brethren*, and it is a charge incumbent on us, by all good means to preſerve them from the worſt of miſchiefs.

In fine, there is plainly nothing more inconſiſtent with true charity, than ſuch a compliance with ſin, or neglect of duty in the ſight of our neighbour, which is ſcandalous, or may prove contagious to him; for how can we love him, whoſe chief good, whoſe eternal welfare we do not tender? whom we do not fear to ſeduce into the way of extreme miſery, or do not at leaſt care to lead into the way of happineſs; whom without any check we can ſuffer to forfeit the beſt goods, and to incur the ſaddeſt calamities?

Wherefore if the love of our ſelves, and a ſober regard to our own welfare be not ſufficient to induce us, yet a charitable diſpoſition, and a concernedneſs for our neighbour (for our brethren, our relations, our friends) ſhould move us to a good, innocent, vertuous, fruitfull and exemplary converſation; If we do not care to ſave our ſelves, yet let it pity us to damn and deſtroy others by our negligence. Rom. 14. 15.

III. But

III. But if charity will not move us, yet juſtice, exacting from us a care of our good converſation before men, ſhould conſtrain us thereto.

Exemplary and edifying converſation is a debt which we owe to the world; a good office impoſed on us by the Laws of common humanity.

When without our own hurt or inconvenience we can doe conſiderable good to our neighbour, he hath a title thereto (granted by the common Authour of our nature, the abſolute Lord of all we are or have) and he may juſtly demand it from us; as we in like caſe might claim it from him, and certainly would in matters agreeable to our humour expect it; Wherefore ſeeing good converſation not onely doth not harm or incommode us, but is moſt beneficial to our ſelves, and it exceedingly may benefit our neighbour, it is moſt juſt that we ſhould afford it to him; it is no more than fair dealing to doe it, to neglect it is a real injury to him.

To ſet ill example before our neighbour, or (which is in part, and in effect the ſame) to withhold good example from him (for not to give a good example is a bad thing, and ſo a bad example; this) I ſay is plainly a great iniquity, and a wrong to him. For,

Is it not an injury to offer a cup of poiſon to any man, to invite him to drink it, to be his taſter of it, ſo drawing him to take it off without ſuſpicion or fear of deadly miſchief? is it not an injury to forbear warning him thereof, or not to deter him from it, when it ſtandeth before him, and he is ready to put it to his mouth? would not ſuch a man in all conſcionable eſteem paſs for a murtherer of his neighbour?

Is it not a great wrong to carry any man out of his way (out of a right, eaſie, fair and ſafe road) into mazes, thickets and ſloughs, or into intricate, foul, dangerous bye-ways? Is it not wrongfull, when he doth wander or err, not to reduce him thence, not to ſet him in the right way?

Is it not very foul dealing to bring a man to a ſteep precipice, and thence to leap down before him? is it not ſo, not to ſtop him, when he is on the brink, and blindly moving forward to caſt himſelf down head-long?

If theſe be injurious dealings, then palpably it is far more ſuch to yield any inticements or encouragements, yea not to put obſtructions, if we are able to our neighbour's incurring ſin, which to his ſoul is all thoſe things; the moſt banefull venom, the moſt wofull exorbitancy, the moſt pernicious gulf that can be.

Prov. 8. 36. We *by ſinning* do not onely (as the *Wiſeman* ſaith) *wrong our own ſouls*, but we do alſo wrong the ſouls of others; drawing them, or driving them by the efficacious impulſe of our example into miſchief and miſery; for

1 Cor. 8. 12. *When* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *ye ſin ſo againſt the brethren, and wound their weak conſcience, ye ſin againſt Chriſt*; he there ſpeaketh of bad example; the which he not only affirmeth to be ſinfull in regard of *Chriſt*, but calleth it ſinning againſt our brethren; and ſuppoſeth that we thereby do wound, or *ſmite* their conſcience; which to doe is ſurely no leſs wrong to them, than if we ſhould aſſault, beat and wound their bodies; the wounds of conſcience being of all moſt grievous, and producing moſt inſupportable affliction; according to that of the *Wiſeman*, *The ſpirit of a man will bear his infirmities, but a wounded ſpirit who can bear?*

Prov. 18. 14.

Indeed by thus hurting our neighbour, we do him a wrong, not onely very great in it ſelf, but ſuch as may probably be irreparable, for which

Ὁ γὰρ ἁμαρτάνων ἐπὶν εἴδη τινα ὅμοια αὐτῷ δρῶντα οἰκοδομηθήσεται εἰς τὸ τὰ αὐτὰ πιεῖν. *Conſt. Ap.* 2. 17.

Τύπτοντες αὐτῶν τὴν συνείδησιν ἀδυνῶσαι ——

which hardly we can ever be able to make him any reſtitution or compenſation; for a better example ſcarce will reach all, whom a bad example hath touched; the beſt example hardly will avail to undo that, which a bad example hath done; If thereby we have engaged our neighbour in ſin, we by no means can reſtore his loſt innocence; or prevent his ſaying, *Woe be to me, for I have ſinned*; It will be very difficult to recover him into that ſtate (that ſound condition of ſoul) from which we did move him; it will however coſt him, if not a final ruine, yet a ſore repentance; the pangs whereof no compenſation, which we can yield, will requite: The wounds which we thereby do inflict may rankle, and prove incurable; they aſſuredly will find no eaſie cure; they muſt however either in conſequence, or in the correction be very painfull; and they will leave an ugly ſcar behind them.

Lam. 5. 16.

1 Cor. 8. 11.

The injuſtice of this practice may alſo farther appear, upon divers ſpecial accompts.

All men eſteem pity a debt, which one man oweth to another as liable to grief and miſery; (the obligation whereto is written in the bowels of each man) which pity will incline to ſuccour the object of it in danger or diſtreſs; wherefore every man by the natural law is bound to endeavour the prevention or the reſcue of another falling into miſchief; according to that of St. *Jude*, *Of ſome have compaſſion, making a difference, and others ſave with fear, pulling them out of the fire*; whence to draw men into ſin by ill practice, or not to reſtrain them from it by good, is unjuſt, as a pittileſs hard-hearted, cruel thing.

Jude 22, 23.

1 Sam. 3. 13. (*His ſons made themſelves vile, and reſtrained them not.*)

Again, all men hold flattery to be a practice very abuſive, or more than ſimply wrongfull; as with injury joining contempt and cozenage: taking advantage of a man's infirmity to work prejudice to him; it is indeed a miſchievous, a pernicious, and withall a perfidious, an inſidious, an enſnaring practice; for, *A flattering mouth* (ſaith the *Wiſe-man*) *worketh ruine*, and *A man that flattereth his neighbour, ſpreadeth a net for his feet*; But flattery is not onely verbal; the worſt flattery is not that whereby men ſooth and gloze with their lips, encouraging others by fictitious commendations to perſiſt in bad courſes; there is a tacit flattery, when by our connivence at ſin, we ſeem to approve it; there is a real flattery when by our compliance with ſin we recommend it to our *camerades*; Theſe do not look ſo groſly, yet do iuſinuate our mind, and commonly do inveagle to ſin more effectually; men being more apt to truſt our deeds than our words, being more pleaſed in our vouching their actions by a participation in them, and running a common hazard with them, than in our ſtreining to commend, or to excuſe them: whence it is, that groſs flattery hath its effect chiefly upon ſimpler folks, but this ſubtile flattery doth often gull and abuſe perſons of greateſt capacity.

Prov. 31. 30. *Favour is deceitfull.*

Prov. 26. 28. 29. 5.

Again, a good converſation before men is a part of that due reſpect, which we owe to them; There is a regard and a kind of reverence to be had toward every man; which ſhould engage us to behave our ſelves decently in his preſence, ſignifying a conſideration and eſteem of his perſon, of his opinion, of his reſentment, of his affection toward us: To doe any foul, or unhandſome thing is a contempt of him, a rudeneſs toward him, an affront put on him; whereby in effect we do ſlight, diſparage and reproach him; implying, that we do little value his judgment, that we care not for his good-will; that we preſume he hath not the ſenſe to diſcern, or hath not the ſpirit to diſlike, or muſt have the patience

tience to comport with our unſeemly and unſavoury carriage; And if to doe other unhandſome things before men is ſuch an indignity offered to them, then it is eſpecially ſuch to commit ſin before them, which is the moſt ugly, the moſt ſordid, the moſt loathſome behaviour that can be; there is no deformity, no turpitude in nature comparable to ſin; nothing ſo offenſive, ſo diſtaſtfull, ſo abominable to a rational ſenſe; ſo that the Prov. 14. 21. *Wiſe-man*'s ſaying is very true, taken any-way, *He that deſpiſeth his neighbour, ſinneth*; 'tis both a ſin to contemn him; and ſinning is an argument 11. 12. of contempt toward him; Nor can we better obſerve St. *Peter*'s injunction, that we 1 Pet. 2. 17. *Honour all men*, than by forbearing to ſin in their preſence, out of reſpect to them. But farther,

IV. Let us conſider, that a good converſation before men is a publick benefit, a great advantage to the world and common ſtate of men.

It is not onely a good office of charity to this or that man; but it layeth a general obligation on our Countrey, on our age, on poſterity it ſelf; upon which a fruitfull life, an exemplary vertue may have notable influence.

As notorious ſin is a plague to the world, throwing infection and death about it; provoking the wrath of Heaven, and thence deriving vengeance on it; So notable vertue is a general bleſſing, producing moſt wholeſome and comfortable effects to mankind.

For how can one more oblige the publick, than by conferring help to uphold the reputation, and to propagate the entertainment of thoſe things which are the main props of the world, for the ſake of which it ſtandeth, and by the means of which it is ſuſtained; than by preſerving the vertue and power of conſcience, which is the band of all Society, the guardian of faith and honeſty, the beſt enſurer of juſtice, order and peace in the State; Prov. 14. 34. (that which *exalteth a nation*, and *eſtabliſheth a kingdom*) than by pro- 20. 28. ducing and promoting thoſe things, which certainly will procure the favour and bleſſing of God on any people?

How can a man better deſerve of the world, than by concurring to ſtop the contagion of ſin, and the overſpreading deluge of iniquity, together with all the lamentable miſchiefs conſequent on them; than by averting the fierce wrath, and ſevere judgments of God, which a general prevalence of wickedneſs neceſſarily will bring down?

Moſt men pretend to be concerned even for the honour of their Countrey; and how can we better promote that, than by checking the progreſs Prov. 14. 34. of *ſin*, which will not onely be the bane, but *is* (as *Solomon* telleth us) *the reproach of any people?*

It may poſſibly be, it hath really been, that the conſpicuous vertue of a few men (yea ſometimes of one ſingle perſon) hath leavened a Countrey, hath ſeaſoned an age, hath imbued poſterity with an admiration of goodneſs, and with an affection to it. (*One man*, ſaith St. *Chryſoſtome*, *enflamed with zeal, may ſuffice to reform an entire people.*) So among the *Pagans*, one Perſon did ſet up the ſtudy of Morality, and worthily was ſtyled *the parent of* (that moſt uſefull) *Philoſophy*, whereby he did exceedingly benefit mankind, and did confer much toward preparing men for the reception of our heavenly Philoſophy.

Ἀρχεῖ εἷς ἄνθρωπος ζήλῳ πυρωμένος ὁλόκληρον διορθώσασθαι πόλιν. Chryſ. Ἀνδρ. α'.

Socrates *philoſophiæ parens.* Cic.

Matt. 5. 13, 14. Such our *Lord* deſigned his *Apoſtles* to be; for, *Ye* (ſaith he) *are the lights of the world, ye are the ſalt of the earth*; and ſuch in effect they 2 Cor. 2. 14. did prove, *God by them* (as St. *Paul* ſaith) *manifeſting the ſavour of his knowledge*

knowledge in every place; they not onely by their heavenly doctrine, but chiefly by the luſtre and influence of their holy example converting the world from impious errours and naughty practices unto true religion, and vertuous converſation; They did lead men to goodneſs not onely by the ears, but by the eyes, ſeeing their excellent life, and *walking as they had them for enſamples.* Phil. 3. 17. 1 Cor. 11. 1-- 1 Cor. 4. 16.

It conſequently may be, yea hath been, that the ſingular integrity of one, or of a few perſons, diſplaying it ſelf, hath appeaſed divine wrath, and hath ſtaved off imminent ruine from a people. So one *Noah* publickly maintaining, and *preaching righteouſneſs*, did preſerve the whole race of men from extirpation; So ten perſons avowing righteouſneſs would have kept *Sodom* from that rufull deſtruction; So one good man (notably owning God, and interpoſing for the concerns of piety) might have prevented that calamitous vengeance, which fell upon *Iſrael*; as *Jeremy* told before, and *Ezekiel* affirmed after it; *Run ye to and fro*, (ſaith God in *Jeremy*) *through the ſtreets of Jeruſalem, and ſee now and know, and ſeek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that ſeeketh truth, and I will pardon it*; and *I ſought for a man* (ſaith God in *Ezekiel*) *among them, that ſhould make up the hedge, and ſtand in the gap before me for the land, that I ſhould not deſtroy it; but I found none, therefore have I powred mine indignation upon them.* There was then *a remnant* of thoſe, who cloſely did ſerve God; and perhaps *ſeven thouſand* unknown perſons, who had not in their hearts deſerted religion; but this did not avert God's wrath, or preſerve the Nation from captivity; as a few openly profeſſing, and reſolutely practiſing goodneſs might have done. 2 Pet. 2. 5. Gen. 18. 32. Jer. 5. 1. Ezek. 22. 30. Iſa. 1. 9. 1 Kings 19. 14, 18.

Now who would not be glad of being ſo publick a friend, ſo general a benefactour, in performing that, which doth otherwiſe ſo much become him, and ſo greatly behove him; yielding him the beſt ornaments, and higheſt advantages even upon his private accompt? who would not be ambitious both to oblige his Countrey, and to ſave his own ſoul together, by a worthy converſation?

Aſſuredly nothing can be deviſed more conducible to the effecting a reformation and amendment of the world (and conſequently to the proſperity and felicity of mankind here) than a conſpiracy of good men in a frank and brisk avowing of goodneſs in the face of the world.

V. A care of our converſation in the ſight of men, is needfull for the preſervation of our good name, and fair repute among them.

A good name in holy Scripture is repreſented as a ſpecial gift, and bleſſing of God; beſtowed in recompence of piety and vertue; and preferred before other moſt conſiderable gifts and bleſſings, concerning our external ſtate; for *By humility*, (ſaith the *Wiſe-man*) *and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honour*; both are the rewards of piety; but comparing them, *A good name* (ſaith he) *is rather to be choſen than great riches*; It cannot therefore be a contemptible thing, nor ought it to be neglected by us; for none of God's gifts, no reward which he propoſeth ought to be ſlighted. 1 Chr. 29. 12. Eccl. 6. 2. (Eccl. 7. 1.) Prov. 22. 4. (Pſ. 112. 9.) Prov. 22. 1.

Reaſon and experience alſo do concur in ſhewing that a good repute is a valuable thing, not onely as a fair ornament of our perſons, and a commodious inſtrument of action toward our private welfare; as a guard of our ſafety and quiet, as ſerving to procure divers conveniences of life;

Δι οἰκονομίαν τινα. Anton. 4. §. 19.

but as very advantageous, very uſefull upon moral and ſpiritual accompts; qualifying us with greater eaſe and efficacy to ſerve God, and to doe good; for indeed 'tis manifeſt, that without it we ſhall be uncapable of doing God or man any conſiderable ſervice.

Wherefore in duty and wiſedom we ſhould be carefull of preſerving this jewel: the which we cannot otherwiſe doe, than by obſerving this *Apoſtolical* rule, of *providing things honeſt in the ſight of all men*; for a good converſation is the onely guard and convoy of a good name; how can men conceive good opinion of us otherwiſe than from a view of worthy qualities and good deeds? they may charitably hope, but they cannot confidently judge well of us otherwiſe than upon good evidence: *Ye ſhall know them by their fruits* (that is, by apparent works, falling under humane cogniſance) is the rule, whereby our *Saviour* teacheth us to diſtinguiſh of men, and to build a right opinion concerning them: Honour is the ſhadow, the inſeparable attendant of conſpicuous vertue.

Matt. 7. 16. 12. 33.

A good converſation will indeed command eſteem, and irreſiſtibly extort reſpect from all men.

Wiſe and good men heartily will approve it, and gladly will yield it due commendation; they cannot but honour it whenever they ſee it, as beſt ſuiting with their own judgment, and with their affection.

Rom. 14. 18.

Yea it will procure reſpect even from the worſt men; for it is a miſtake to think, that bad men really do or can deſpiſe true goodneſs; in truth however they may pretend or make a ſhew to ſlight and ſcorn it, however in words they may flout and revile it, yet in their hearts they cannot but admire and reverence it; although their will may be ſo perverted as to ſet them againſt it, yet their reaſon cannot be ſo deſtroyed (or natural light ſo quenched in them) as to diſapprove it; they do but vilely diſſemble, and belye their conſcience, when they make as if they did condemn, or contemn it: *As* (ſaith St. *Chryſoſtome*) *they who openly do flatter ill livers, do in their mind reprove them; ſo they who envy the workers of good in their conſcience will admire, and approve them:* At leaſt they will doe thus in their ſober mind; when with any ſerious application they do reflect on things; when the eye of their ſoul is any-wiſe cleared from the miſts of luſt and paſſion; It is not to be heeded what they ſay in a fluſter or ranting mood; when they are near out of their wits, and have their judgment ſtifled by ſenſual imaginations; but what they think, when ther mind is ſomewhat compoſed, and natural light doth ſhine freely in it.

Οἱ ἐν βασιλείᾳ τῦτο πάσχοντες, καὶ τὸ συνειδὸς ὑμᾶς θαυμάσονται, καὶ ἀπὸ δόξονται· ὥσπερ ἐν οἱ φαύλως κολακεύοντες τὸς ἐν πονηρίᾳ ζῶντας, καὶ νῦν διαβάλλεσι. Chryſ. *in* Matt. 5. 16.

Indeed ſuch wretches really do moſt deſpiſe thoſe, who conſort and comply with them in ſinfull follies; As they cannot in their hearts honour themſelves, ſo they cannot eſteem thoſe whom they find like unto them; eſpecially they deſpiſe thoſe whom they obſerve to be ſo baſe and ſilly, as againſt their own judgment and conſcience, to fear their diſpleaſure, or to regard their cenſure; looking upon them as vaſſals to their humour, and renegadoes from their own conſcience.

Moreover a good converſation certainly will engage Almighty God to protect our reputation, and to confer honour upon us. For he as Governour of the World, the Patron of goodneſs, the diſpenſer of proper rewards to all, is in a manner bound to encourage thoſe openly, who viſibly do own him and take his part, who promote his glory and intereſt; who pay him due ſervice and obedience; who in regard to his authority, do faith-

faithfully purſue that which is right and good; He ſurely will ſee fit to repay ſuch in the ſame kind, by openly acknowledging, countenancing and honouring them; Accordingly he hath tied himſelf to doe ſo by his expreſs word and promiſe, for *Them*, ſaith he, *that honour me, I will honour; and they that deſpiſe me, ſhall be lightly eſteemed*; he ſaid it in reference to old *Eli*, who had neglected the duty of *reſtraining his ſons* from ſin; which is a caſe very much of kin to all neglect of exemplary piety. And, *Whoſoever*, ſaith our Lord, *ſhall confeſs me before men, him ſhall the ſon of man alſo confeſs before the Angels of God; but he that denieth me before men, ſhall be denied before the Angels of God*; the which (one moſt comfortable, the other moſt terrible) ſentences are to be underſtood, He that confeſſeth our Lord not merely by verbal profeſſion (for divers ſuch who *ſay Lord, Lord*, he will not ſo much as *know* at the final judgment) but in real practice; He that denieth him, not onely by renouncing him with the tongue, but by diſobeying him in ſcandalous converſation, by working iniquity, by the Apoſtaſie of bad manners.

1 Sam. 2. 30.

Luke 12. 8.

Matt. 7. 22, 23.

VI. Laſtly, the publick diſcharge of a good conſcience will yield manifold advantages, and great benefits to our ſelves; not onely as good (and thence needfull to our ſalvation, and our comfort) but as publick; ſome of which I ſhall touch.

Such a practice will much ſecure and ſtrengthen us in goodneſs; for he that hath the heart, with reſolution and conſtancy, to doe well, notwithſtanding any worldly diſcouragement, although he thereby doth croſs the humour of the world, and incurreth the diſpleaſure, envy, hatred, cenſure and obloquy of men, he thus having exalted his vertue above the favour and fear of the world, hath ſet it in a ſafe place, hath rendred it impregnable.

The conſideration of having obtained ſo happy, and ſo worthy a victory over the moſt dangerous temptations (the victory of faith over the world) will be very comfortable; And the ſufferings which (from the diſfavour, enmity, and oppoſition of men) do attend ſuch a practice, being a kind of martyrdom, will yield all the joys and comforts (together with the hopes and rewards) of an heroical patience.

1 John.

It will afford great ſatisfaction of mind to reflect on the conſequences of ſuch a practice; and to conſider, that our reſolution hath engaged or confirmed others in goodneſs, hath preſerved them from ſin, hath withdrawn them from bad courſes, and ſaved them from perdition; that we have been inſtrumental to the ſalvation and happineſs of any ſoul; that beſide our own ſins (which are a burthen too heavy for any man well to bear) we have not the ſins of others to accompt for, and ſhall not be loaded with the guilt of thoſe, whom our neglect of duty, our compliance with ſin, our ſtupid coldneſs and indifference in regard to ſpiritual affairs, our diſſimulation or convenience at the ſcandalous violation of God's honour, and tranſgreſſion of his laws, might have encouraged in ſin; that we are not liable to that reproof in the Prophet, *Ye have ſtrengthned the hands of the wicked, that he ſhould not return from his wicked way.*

Ezek. 13. 22.

We ſhall highly oblige thoſe, whom by our good endeavour or example we ſhall convert to righteouſneſs, or reclaim from iniquity, or ſhall anywiſe ſtop in their carriere to ruine; who when they ſhall recover from their errour, and ſoberly reflect on their caſe (when they ſhall ἀνανήψειν, become again ſober, getting out as it were of their drunken fit) will heartily thank us, will bleſs us, will pray for us, as having laid on them

2 Tim. 2. 26.

them a very great obligation, and done them the greateſt kindneſs that could be; ſo that they will be ready to ſay to us, as *David* did to *Abigail*, 1 Sam. 25. 32. *Bleſſed be the Lord God of Iſrael, who ſent thee this day to meet me; and bleſſed be thy advice; and bleſſed be thou, which haſt kept me this day from ſhedding of bloud:* This will be the conſequence of plain dealing in ſuch Prov. 28. 23. 27. 6. 19. 25. caſes, and that will be fulfilled, which the *Wiſe-man* ſaith, *He that rebuketh a man, afterwards ſhall find more favour, than he that flattereth with the tongue.*

We thereby ſhall eſcape the ſore complaints, and fell curſes of thoſe, whom our naughty or careleſs demeanour hath involved in ſinfull practice; for when their conſcience is awakened into a ſenſe of their guilt, when they feel the ſtings of remorſe, when they perceive the extreme damage and woe which they have incurred, then will they diſcharge their reſentments of heart againſt thoſe, who have any-wiſe been acceſſory to their fall into ſuch a condition; then in their bitterneſs of ſoul, in the agony of their ſorrow and perplexity they will be apt to exclaim, Curſed be the day that I knew ſuch an one, or that I did converſe with him, who did betray me into this plight, who did inveagle me into temptation, who did not pluck me back from that ſinfull practice, by which I now ſo deeply ſuffer; Curſed be his baſe cowardiſe, his fond modeſty, his affected wiſedom, his treacherous negligence, his unconſcionable indifference, his impious want of zeal for God's honour, and charity for my ſoul, which did keep him from checking me in my bad courſes, and reclaiming me to my duty by wholſome reproof, by ſeaſonable advice, by exemplary practice before me: It will ſurely be a great comfort to us, that we have not given occaſion for ſuch complaints; but in proportion may ſay with St. Acts 20. 26. *Paul, I am pure from the bloud of all men, for I have not ſhunned to declare* Ezek. 7. 17. 33. 7. *unto you all the counſel of God.*

It is alſo no ſmall advantage to us, that by a good converſation we ſhall procure the particular friendſhip and affection of good men; for it is that, which diſcovereth good men to one another, which kindleth their affection toward each other, which draweth them together, and breedeth a familiarity between them, and knitteth their hearts together in a holy love; from whence they come to enjoy the faithfull advice, the kind aſſiſtence, the ſeaſonable conſolations, and the hearty prayers each of other; the which great benefits are loſt by concealment of our ſelves, and reſervedneſs in doing good; for how can any man know him to deſerve love, whoſe goodneſs is not diſcernible?

Such conſiderations may induce all perſons, of every rank and condition, to obſerve this Apoſtolical Precept, ſo far as their capacities do reach, I ſhall onely adjoin, that it eſpecially doth concern perſons of quality, in proportion to their eminency in dignity, power, authority, reputation, or any peculiar advantage, whereby the beneficial efficacy of good converſation is encreaſed?

Matt. 5. 15. Such perſons are like *a city ſeated on a mountain, which cannot be hid*; the height of their ſtation, and luſtre of their quality do expoſe them to the obſervation of all; and their authority doth recommend their practice to the imitation of obſervers.

Their example cannot fail of having a mighty influence; its light doth guide men, its weight doth ſway them; it doth ſeem to warrant and authorize practice; inferiours would be afraid or aſhamed to diſcoſt from it.

They have not the temptations, which other men have, to comply with ſin out of fear, out of complaiſance, out of deſign; they being to lead

lead and give law, not to follow or receive it; they being the firſt movers in converſation; the faſhion being regulated by them, or indeed being merely a conformity to their deportment.

They ſhould by their innocence qualify themſelves to reprove others with authority and courage. *Conſt. Apoſt.* 2. 17.

They in gratitude to God, who hath beſtowed on them ſuch advantages, are obliged to employ them for his ſervice.

They particularly were deſigned and endowed with thoſe advantages, that by them they might countenance, might encourage, might reward, might by all means promote goodneſs in the world. Rom. 13. 3---6. 1 Pet. 2. 14.

They accordingly are reſponſible for the influence their converſation hath; ſo that in the final accompt moſt actions of men will lie at their door, ſo that they ſhall reſpectively be either highly rewarded for the vertues and good works, or ſeverely puniſhed for the vices and ſins of mankind: the which moſt weighty conſideration I leave by God's grace to be ſeriouſly applied by them, who are concerned therein.

Sermon XXXIV.

Provide things honeſt in the ſight of all Men.

2 COR. VIII. 21.

Providing for honeſt things not onely in the ſight of the Lord, but in the ſight of Men.

IF we obſerve the world, we may eaſily therein diſcern many perſons, who being inwardly well diſpoſed, (ſtanding right both in judgment and affection to goodneſs) are yet loth to appear very good, and hardly will own Chriſtian vertue, in the conſtant diſcharge of publick duties, or in ſtrict abſtinence from ſinfull practices; but commonly (againſt the dictate of their reaſon, and ſenſe of their heart) neglect the one, and comply with the other: An odd ſort of hypocrites, or diſſemblers; who ſtudiouſly conceal their better part, and counterfeit themſelves worſe than they are; who adore God in their hearts, and addreſs devotions to him in their cloſets; but ſcarce will avow him in their viſible profeſſion and practice; who have a conſcience, but are ſhy of diſcloſing it, or letting it take air, and walk in open light; confining it as a criminal to cloſe reſtraint, or obſcure retirement; who gladly would be religious and

and ſtaunch, if there might be no notice taken of it, but take care of being remarkable (or as it were ſcandalous) for it; who think fit to compromiſe, and compound the buſineſs between God and the world, maintaining a neutrality, and correſpondence with both, ſo as privately to court the one, and publickly to cloſe with the other.

Such practice is flatly repugnant to that Rule, which otherwhere in pre-
Rom. 12. 17. cept, and here by his own example the holy *Apoſtle* doth recommend to
Ἐνώπιον Κυρίου. us; directing us not only *before God* (that is, in our heart, and in our ſecret retirements, which God alone doth behold) but alſo *before men*, that is, in our external and viſible converſation carefully to perform things good and laudable, eſchewing whatever is bad or culpable.

Our obligation to which Rule hath already been confirmed by divers other Precepts in *holy Scripture*, concurring in the injunction of it; and its obſervance urged by various poſitive conſiderations of great weight and force (declaring how neceſſary it is for promoting God's honour and glory, how requiſite it is for maintaining the dignity of our profeſſion, and advancing the intereſts of goodneſs, how charity and juſtice toward our neighbour do exact it from us, how conducible it is to the publick benefit of mankind, and how advantageous in many reſpects to our own particular welfare) and not inſiſting farther upon thoſe conſiderations I ſhall now only inforce it, by ſcanning the common principles, grounds, motives, pretences, or excuſes of the contrary practice, which I before touched, of openly deſerting vertue, or declining the performance of duty before men; and by ſhewing how very fooliſh and vain, how very naughty and baſe, how very miſchievous, dangerous and pernicious they are.

They chiefly are thoſe, which I ſhall immediately touch and reflect upon.

1. Men commonly in their viſible converſation do neglect their duty, or comply with ſin out of modeſty; becauſe they are aſhamed of doing that, which may expoſe them to ſome diſgrace or cenſure; becauſe vertuous practice may raiſe diſtaſte in the company, and provoke the ſcorn of thoſe with whom they converſe; becauſe ſuch a point of duty is out of
Jer. 1. 8. requeſt, and ſlighted in the world; they are *afraid of mens faces*; their tender forehead cannot ſuſtain deriſion, or endure to be flouted for being out of the mode, and wearing an uncouth garb of conſcience.

But this plainly is a perverſe, and unmanly modeſty; a fond, a vile, a ſhamefull ſhame: fie on it; ſhould any man be aſhamed of that, which is his chief beauty, his beſt ornament, his ſole dignity and glory? ſhould a man be aſhamed of being evidently wiſe in his conduct, of following his reaſon, of conſulting his true intereſt, of purſuing his own certain welfare and felicity? is it fit that any man ſhould be aſhamed of paying due acknowledgment, of yielding due reverence, of rendring due gratitude, of performing due ſervice to his Creatour, Sovereign Lord, and great Benefactour; to whom he oweth all, upon whoſe will he entirely dependeth, at whoſe abſolute diſpoſal he is? ſurely theſe are no ſhamefull things, but ſuch rather, wherein we ought to have the greateſt confidence, which we ought to perform with the greateſt aſſurance.

If we are baſhfull, let us be ſo in regard to things which are truly ſhamefull; let us be aſhamed of ſin, that is, of our moſt real deformity, our turpitude, our diſgrace, our wretchedneſs; the which indeed is the onely
Gen. 3. 2. 2. 25. diſhonourable and deſpicable thing; the which did firſt produce ſhame, and did introduce it into the world (for while innocence did abide, there

was

was no ſhame) and the which will ever carry ſhame along as its inſeparable adherent: it would indeed become us to bluſh at our horrible unworthineſs, and deteſtable ingratitude toward our bountifull Lord, and moſt gracious Redeemer; it were proper for us to be confounded at our extreme folly, and foul treachery toward our ſelves, in betraying our ſouls to guilt, to regret, to wrath and puniſhment: Who ſhould be aſhamed, who not, the holy *Pſalmiſt* hath well taught us, *Let none that wait on thee be aſhamed; let them be aſhamed which tranſgreſs without cauſe*; and, *Let the proud be aſhamed*----but *Let my heart be ſound in thy ſtatutes, that I be not aſhamed.* Pſal. 25. 3. Pſal. 119. 78. 80.

It is true modeſty to be aſhamed of doing unworthy and unhandſome things; but to be aſhamed of doing what reaſon and duty require, is pitifull weakneſs of mind.

We do not owe ſo much regard to vitious and vain perſons, as to be daſhed out of countenance by them; we ſhould rather by our maſculine reſolution and upright confidence put them to confuſion. Tit. 2. 8.

If ſhame be an evil which we would avoid, the onely remedy thereof we may learn from thoſe words of the *Pſalmiſt*, *then ſhall I not be aſhamed, when I have reſpect to thy teſtimonies*: but it is a fond courſe to ſhun diſgrace by doing that which alone deſerveth it. Pſal. 119. 6.

Is it not alſo a wild thing, to ſeem modeſt toward men, while we are really ſo bold with God, as preſumptuouſly to offend him, to affront him, *to provoke him* (as thoſe in the Prophet did) *to his face?* for ſo indeed every ſinner doth; and as it is the greateſt inadvertency not to conſider God alway preſent with us, ſo it is the height of impudence to ſin in his preſence, or to prefer a regard to men before the reverence due to his eye.

Quid quæſo rationis habet verecundari ad diem hominis, & vultum Dei non vereri? Bern. *Ep.* 108.
Iſa. 65. 3.
Jer. 6. 17. 8. 12.

Is it not alſo great folly for declining a little preſent tranſient diſgrace, to doe that, whereof afterward we ſhall be grievouſly and perpetually aſhamed; which we ſhall never remember or reflect upon without confuſion, (according to that of the *Apoſtle*, *What fruit had ye of thoſe things, whereof ye are now aſhamed?*) the conſequence whereof is our ſtanding obnoxious to *ſhame and everlaſting contempt.* Sap. 4. 20. (Jer 22. 22.) Rom. 6. 21. Dan. 12. 2.

If we be thus aſhamed of God, and of our duty to him, may he not juſtly in recompence be aſhamed of us, and diſdain to own us in favour and mercy? he will ſurely, he hath often declared ſo; *Whoſoever*, ſaith our *Lord, ſhall be aſhamed of me, and of my words, of him ſhall the Son of man be aſhamed, when he ſhall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy Angels.* Luke 9. 26. 12. 9. 2 Tim. 2. 12.

2. Another principle, near of kin to the former, diſpoſing men to commit ſin, or wave duty in their open converſation, is, fear of loſing the good-will, or getting the ill-will of men.

It muſt often happen, that whoever will be vertuous, and ſtick to his duty, will forfeit the favour of men, will incur their diſpleaſure, will provoke their indignation; by croſſing their humour and conceit, by implicitly ſlighting their opinion, and condemning their practice; this is the portion and fate of ſtrict, and ſtiff piety; the friendſhip of God and the world are not well conſiſtent; and St. *Paul's* rule may be converted, *If I ſhould pleaſe men, I ſhould not be the ſervant of Chriſt*: hence men prizing the favour of men with the advantages of it, and dreading their anger, hatred, diſdain, with the miſchiefs conſequent on them, are ſcared from their duty. Jam. 4. 4. 1 John 2. 15. Gal. 1. 10.

But

But in truth this is a ſilly, a baſe, a ſorry fear, arguing wretched meanneſs of ſpirit, and pitifull cowardiſe. For,

Doſt thou, fond wretch, fear to loſe the favour of man, whoſe favour doth avail nothing to thy main intereſts, and cannot any-wiſe conſiderably benefit thee (for in no reſpect doſt thou depend on his will and providence) but doſt not fear being deprived of God's favour, upon which all thy good hangeth, wherein thy felicity conſiſteth, without which thou art uncapable of any proſperity, of any ſecurity, of any joy or comfort?

Doſt thou fear the diſpleaſure of man, of poor impotent man, a ſorry frail *worm*, whoſe *breath is in his noſtrils*, (ready to fly away in every moment) whoſe anger can doe thee no real harm, whoſe power can hardly touch thee, can no-wiſe reach thy ſoul, or its concerns; whilſt thou dreadeſt not to offend the Eternal Almighty God, under whoſe feet thou lieſt, ready to be cruſhed into nothing, or ſtampt down into Hell at his pleaſure?

Job 25. 6. Iſa. 2. 22. Matt. 10. 28.

Dareſt thou not, O heartleſs daſtard, to doe that, which is in thy power eaſily to doe, which thou art infinitely concerned to doe, which upon ſo many accompts thou art obliged to doe, out of fear to croſs thine equal, yea far thine inferiour in this caſe; for he that ſtandeth to his duty, as he hath the better cauſe, ſo he hath the greater force, and aſſuredly will defeat all his oppoſers?

Art thou, O puſillanimous ſlave, in regard to any Creature, thy fellow-ſubject, and ſervant, afraid of expreſſing thy loyalty to thy Sovereign Lord, thy love to infinite goodneſs, thy gratitude to thy beſt friend and kindeſt benefactour, thy reverence toward the divine Majeſty, thine awe of uncontrollable power: Is this a reaſonable, an excuſable, a tolerable fear?

Surely if ever to be driven out of heart is reproachfull, if ever to be cowed doth argue infirmity and abjectneſs of ſpirit, it is in this caſe; when we have all the reaſon and obligation in the world to be moſt courageous and reſolute, to fear no colours, to make our party good againſt all oppoſition; when we have the greateſt neceſſity to ingage us, and the greateſt advantage to encourage us to hold out ſtoutly; the greateſt neceſſity, ſeeing all that we have, our life, our ſalvation, our eternal weal doth lie at ſtake; *For it is not a vain thing for you, becauſe it is your life:* the greateſt advantage, for that if we will, we are invincible, and aſſured of an eaſie victory, ſeeing we take part with God, and have Omnipotency on our ſide; ſo that we can ſay with *David, The Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man can doe unto me: The Lord is my light, and my ſalvation, whom ſhall I fear? the Lord is the ſtrength of my life, of whom ſhall I be afraid?*

Deut. 32. 47.

Pſal. 118. 6. Heb. 13. 6. Pſal. 56. 11. 11. 4. 27. 1, 3. 46. 2. Jer. 1. 8. 20. 11. Iſa. 41. 10. Gen. 26. 24. 15. 1. Num. 14. 9. Deut. 31. 8. 2 Chron. 20. 17.

There is not indeed to thoſe who are under God's ſpecial protection, and confide in him, any thing in nature, really formidable or terrible; it is his peculiar attribute to be the mighty and terrible one; He recommendeth himſelf to us as *our fear*, that is, the ſpecial object of it; we therefore do ſacrilegiouſly wrong him, by fearing any other thing in ſuch caſes of competition, and when we are concerned to fear him; whence then we are prohibited to fear the greateſt powers in the world; *Fear not them which kill the body* (if God permit them) *but are not able to kill the ſoul; but rather fear him who is able to deſtroy both body and ſoul in hell.*

Jer. 5. 22. 10. 7. Rev. 15. 4. Deut. 7. 21. 10. 17. 28. 58. Pſ. 76. 7, 11. 99. 3. Iſa. 8. 12. 41. 10. Matt. 10. 26, 28.

Who (ſaith St. *Peter*) *is he that will* (or that can) *harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?* ---wherefore *be not afraid of their terrour,*

Τίς ὁ κακώσων; 1 Pet. 3. 13, 14.

neither

neither be troubled; but ſanctifie the Lord God in your hearts (by a pure confidence in him.)

In ſuch caſes, we ſhould be ready to accoſt the greateſt Potentates, in terms like thoſe of the three brave Youths in *Daniel*; *O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not carefull to anſwer thee in this matter; If it be ſo, our God whom we ſerve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O King; But* (however) *if not, be it known unto thee, O King; that we will not ſerve thy Gods, nor worſhip thy golden Image which thou haſt ſet up:* And if in imitation of ſo worthy an example we ſhould defie the wrath of the greateſt Kings, demanding any ſinfull compliance from us, how poor a thing is it to fear the diſpleaſure of ſorry companions enticing us to the like? how much more ſhould we defie all the crew of hectorly Ruffians, and huffing Bragadochios? Dan. 3. 16.

While wicked profane men are ſo bold and ſtout in impugning goodneſs; we ſhould be courageous in defence of it. *The righteous is as bold as a Lion.* Prov. 28. 1.

The fear of God (the which is moſt reaſonable and prudent, and conſiſtent with the braveſt courage) ſhould exclude the fear of men; the which is no leſs vain than baſe; the which indeed doth involve the wildeſt boldneſs, and moſt raſh fool-hardineſs in the world, puſhing us into the moſt deſperate adventures that can be; while by ſinning we incenſe the moſt dreadfull anger, we invade the moſt formidable power, we incur the moſt horrible dangers, we run headlong into the jaws of death and hell: ſuch a mixture there is of baſe cowardiſe, and mad audacity in practices iſſuing from that principle.

3. Men commonly do neglect the open practice of vertue, out of care to decline envy; for ill-men ſeeing others endowed with worthy qualities, which they want; performing good deeds, from which their infirmity or pravity doth hold them averſe; entitled to commendations, rewards and advantages to which they cannot aſpire, and whereby they ſeem to eclipſe their credit, or impair their intereſt, or expoſe their unworthineſs; cannot look on ſuch perſons without an *evil eye*, or without conceiving in their heart malevolent grudges at them, which they will be apt to vent in ſpitefull practices, endeavouring to ſupplant or blaſt their vertue; men are apt to envy the favourites of God, as they are of Princes. Nor indeed doth any thing more powerfully incite men to hurt their neighbour, than ſuch malignity, being edged by that anguiſh, which their ſore eye doth feel; to ſhun which envy, and its miſchievous effects men commonly are tempted to withdraw its cauſe, their own vertue, that its bright luſtre may not wound the ſight of ſuch neighbours.

Invidiam placare paras virtute relictâ? Contemnere miſer. Hor. *Serm.* 2. 3.

But thus *to appeaſe envy by deſerting vertue* is very fond and abſurd. For,

Shall I caſt away my beſt goods, becauſe another would not have me to enjoy them? ſhall I be terribly ſick, to cure another's diſtempered fancy? ſhall I render my ſelf miſerable, becauſe another doth not like to ſee me happy? becauſe he doth want charity, muſt I foregoe innocence? becauſe he doth not love me, ſhall I hate my ſelf? to pleaſe him merely, without bettering him, to eaſe him of a wholeſome ſmart, ſhall I diſpleaſe God, and abuſe my ſelf?

Would he not be a ſilly man, who being envied becauſe he ſeemeth a favourite of his Prince, would to gratifie ſuch enviers, offend his Prince? No ſurely this is too fond a regard unto any man's baſe diſpoſition, this is

too great a gratification of an enemies pleaſure, this is too ſlaviſh a depreſſion of a man's ſelf; Rather let him fret, let him torment himſelf, let him inflict a juſt puniſhment on his own uncharitable and unworthy humour; whereby perhaps he may be reduced to diſcern his folly, and correct his fault.

Would any man upon ſuch terms part with his eſtate, mar his buſineſs, ſlur his reputation, or purpoſely play the fool; would any man become poor, infamous or contemptible, becauſe to be rich, to be proſperous, to be honourable, to be wiſe are invidious things? Much leſs ſhould a man upon that accompt neglect his duty, thereby betraying his ſoul, diſcarding the love and favour of God, deſtroying the ſatisfaction of his conſcience, and forfeiting his hopes of felicity: damages and miſchiefs comparable to which all the envy and ſpite in the world can no-wiſe bring upon him.

If we would avoid envy, we ſhould not doe it by incurring a worſe evil, and rendring our ſelves contemptible for unworthineſs; we ſhould rather damp it by modeſty, humility, an inoffenſive tenour of life.

We ſhould ſurmount it, and quaſh it by conſtant blameleſs converſation. The which will kill the envious, or the envy.

An unqueſtionable vertue will ſtop the mouth of detraction, and drive envy into corners, not daring to ſhew it ſelf againſt it.

4. A common principle, from whence neglect of duty, and commiſſion of ſin in viſible converſation doth ſpring, is a fear of infamy, and reproach, whereto the ſtrict practice of vertue is liable; men not enduring to bear the odious cenſures, the foul imputations, the ugly characters, the ſcurvy epithets, and opprobrious names, wherewith the bold and ſpitefull enemies of goodneſs are wont to aſperſe and brand its faithfull adherents.

To be deemed weak, credulous, ſuperſtitious, formal, timorous, nice, ſqueamiſh, ſcrupulous, ſtraitlaced, conceited, affected, croſs, ſurly, moroſe, froward, ſtubborn, pertinacious, proud.

To be termed a foppiſh *ſimpleton*, doting on ſpeculations, and enſlaved to rules; a fantaſtical *humoriſt*, a preciſe *bigot*, a rigid *Stoick*, a demure *ſneaksby*, a clowniſh *ſingulariſt*, a *non-conformiſt* to ordinary uſage, a ſtiff *opiniatre*; a man of a pitifull narrow ſpirit, pent up within a ſmall compaſs, confined by principles, fettered by laws, living in bondage to his conſcience.

Theſe and the like hard cenſures, foul reproaches, and abuſive ſcoffs, even all which invention quickned by envy, choler, rancorous ſpite, and
Pſal. 57. 3, 4. aided by the malitious fiend, can ſuggeſt, wherewith the profane crew of men uſually do conſpire to daub, and perſecute thoſe, who refuſe to comply with their unconſcionable extravagances, and impieties, men can hardly brook, and thence to ſhun them yield up all, croſs their reaſon, proſtitute their conſcience, violate all their obligations; chuſing rather to be juſtly reproachable for bad actions, than unjuſtly reproached for good.

But with ſuch a perſon, who is thus diverted from his duty, let me expoſtulate:

Nihil eſt turpius quàm ſapientis vitam ab inſipientium ſermone pendere. Cic. *de Fin.* 2. (*p.* 147.)

Doſt thou well to regard what unbridled tongues out of a wanton mind and corrupt heart do ſputter and foam? ſhall thy practice depend on their looſe wit,

wit, or licentious talk, ſo that thou muſt doe nothing which they ſhall not be in humour to commend?

Wilt thou renounce all wiſedom, abandon thy beſt intereſt, forfeit thy happineſs to decline a ſquib, or a flurt?

Quid de te alii loquantur, ipſi videant. Scipio *apud* Cic. *in Somn.*

Would not he be a ſtark fool, who would be railed or jeered out of his way in travel, out of his buſineſs in traffick, out of his eſtate, or real intereſt upon any occaſion? and is he not evidently far more ſuch, who will be flouted out of his duty, out of his ſalvation, out of any ſpiritual advantage? was not the practice of *David* more adviſeable, who ſaid, *The proud have had me in deriſion, yet have I not declined from thy Law?* Pſal. 119. 51.

David, a great King, a man of ſingular courage and gallantry, a glorious Heroe; yet even him did bold and baſe people deride. Whom will not profane impudence aſſail; whom will not they attempt to deter from goodneſs?

Art thou ſo blind, as not to diſcern whence it cometh, that they diſparage vertue? that is, from their extreme vanity and raſhneſs, which move them to ſpeak any thing without conſideration or diſcretion; from their great naughtineſs and weakneſs, their being bewitched with pleaſure, and beſotted with vice, which engageth them to take part ſo furiouſly with them; from their malignity, and ſpite againſt that which croſſeth their fond humours and exorbitant luſts; from their pride which ſwelleth againſt thoſe, who by contrary practice diſſent from their folly, and reprove their wickedneſs, and eclipſe their repute; from their envy, which repineth at thy appearing better and happier than themſelves, thy excelling them in true worth, thy enjoying that ſatisfaction which they want, thy attaining that bleſſed hope, to which they cannot aſpire; and ſeeing that their reproaches do iſſue from ſuch principles, wilt thou regard them?

Are their words any ſlander, who being profeſſed enemies of goodneſs do naturally impugn it by the readieſt arms they have, a virulent and petulant tongue?

Οὐδεὶς φαῦλον τὸς σπουδαίους ἐπαινεῖν νομίζει. Iſid. Peluſ. *Ep.* 2. 220.

Can their dirty language, beſpattering good things, alter their nature, or render that diſhonourable and odious, which in it ſelf is moſt excellent, moſt amiable, moſt venerable, moſt uſefull and profitable?

(Οὐ γὰρ δοκεῖν ἄειστον, ἀλλ' εἶναι θέλω. Τὸ δοκεῖν γὰρ ἐσθ' ὅτου πρὸς ἡμᾶς, ὥσπερ οὐδὲ ὄνου ἀλλότριον Greg. Naz. *Orat.*---*de ſede Conſt.*) Ant. 8. § 1.——

Is it not indeed a commendation of vertue, which ſhould encourage us the more to like it, to honour it, to embrace it, that vain, wild, diſſolute perſons, diſtempered in their minds, notoriouſly void of diſcretion, of integrity, of ſobriety, do pretend to vilify and diſgrace it?

Malis diſplicere laudari eſt. Sen. *Excerpt.* (*p.* 690.)

Non poteſt bonus non eſſe, qui bonis placet; nec minùs validum argumentum mihi videtur, quod bonus ſit ſi malis diſpliceat. Bern. *Ep.* 248.

Ἄφρονες. 1 Pet. 2. 15.

Ἄτοποι. 2 Theſſ. 3. 2.

As their commendation is of no worth, ſo their reproach is leſs conſiderable.

Ant. 3. § 4.

Doſt thou not diſparage thine own judgment by heeding theirs, or ſuffering it to be of any conſideration with thee in the conduct of thy life?

Quanta dementia eſt vereri nè infameris ab infamibus? Sen. *Ep.* 91.

Doſt thou take them to be ſerious in this, or to ſpeak in good earneſt, when they reproach vertue, and ſlight the plain dictates of reaſon, the clear light of natural conſcience, the expreſs commands of God, the apparent concerns of their own ſoul? they who are ſober in nothing, how can they be ſerious in this, why ſhould they ſeem judicious in ſuch a caſe?

Moverer ſi judicio hoc facerent, nunc morbo faciunt. Sen. *Exc.*

Ego cùm à noſtro Catone laudabar, vel reprehendi me à cæteris facilè patiebar. Cic. *de Orat.*

Is it not evidently better to be ſlandered by giddy, lewd, ungodly wretches, who mind not what they ſay, nor care what they doe, whoſe judgment therefore can ſignify nothing; than really to deſerve reproof; and thence certainly to incur blame from all ſtaid, ſober, conſiderate, wiſe and vertuous perſons, who judge adviſedly and uprightly about things?

Is it not better to undergo their ſevereſt cenſure, and moſt biting ſcoffs, than to be condemned of folly and baſeneſs by thy own mind, and reviled by thy own conſcience?

Is it not infinitely better to be unjuſtly defamed by men, than to be diſreputed by God, expoſed to moſt diſgracefull condemnation at his bar, and thrown into that ſtate of everlaſting ignominy? Dan. 12. 2.

Tu ergò plus opprobria times quàm tormenta? &c. Bern. *Ep.* 108. Matt. 25. 41.

Is it not more tolerable to hear ſuch language, than having violated our duty, and broken God's commands one day to hear that diſmal ſentence, *Go ye curſed into everlaſting fire?*

Æquiſſimo animo ad honeſtum conſilium per mediam infamiam tendam, &c. Sen. *Ep.* 81.

It is a glorious infamy, which one ſuſtaineth for the ſake of righteouſneſs.

Non vis eſſe juſtus ſine gloria? at mehercule ſæpe juſtus eſſe debebis cum infamia. Sen. *Ep.* 113. Ant. 5. § 3. 11. 16. 9. 18.

Even *Heathens*, with whom glory was the *moſt ample reward*, and ſweeteſt *fruit of vertue*, yet do injoin that we ſhould preſer conſcience before it; and that we ſhould rather gladly embrace infamy, than forſake vertue.

It is the lot of all good men (for probation, exerciſe and improvement of their vertue to be perſecuted) at leaſt in ſome times, as when St. *Paul* ſaid, *All that will live godly in Chriſt Jeſus muſt ſuffer perſecution*; And ſurely he that ſincerely loveth God would even deſire occaſion of ſuffering ſomewhat for his ſake, in teſtimony of his faithfull affection: But what more tolerable perſecution, what more eaſie martyrdom could we wiſh, than to be laſhed by a ſcurrilous tongue; or rather to obſerve the ears of others to be infeſted with the buzzes of detraction? what is this but a little air ſtirred in vain, but a mere ſound or blaſt of wind, importing nought to him that doth not mind it, or will not be affected with it? the which ſurely to a ſound heart and pure conſcience cannot be very ſenſible; a man muſt have a froward temper, or a tender ear, whom a little ſuch creaking, or grating noiſe doth much vex; all its force is broken, all its miſchief is remedied eaſily, by neglect or contempt.

2 Tim. 3. 12. Acts 14. 22. Heb. 12. 6---

Quid ſtultius homine verba metuente? Sen. *Ep.* 91.

It is in a manner more commendable to ſuffer for being good, than for being a Chriſtian; a truer martyrdom to ſuffer for the temper than for the name of *Chriſt*; for doing well, than for profeſſing truth.

Who indeed had ever been good, in any notable degree, if ſome had minded the opinion, or the diſcourſe of ſuch men, whom in all times the great adverſary of goodneſs and maligner of our welfare hath excited to deter men from vertue by thus abuſing it? hath it not ever been the portion of good men to ſuffer in this kind?

Jer. 20. 7——
Pſal. 44. 16, 17. 57. 3, 4. 119. 51. 69. 10.
Job 12. 4. Sap. 5. 3.

Was not * our *Lord* himſelf, were not his *Apoſtles*, were not all the *Prophets* of old, were not all the *Heroes* in goodneſs of all times thus purſued with obloquy? what vile imputation, what name of reproach can be deviſed, wherewith the ſpitefull world did not beſmear them?

Ἐμπαιγμῶν καὶ μαστίγων πεῖραν ἔλαβον. Heb. 11. 36.
* Heb. 12. 3. Ἀναλογίσασθαι——
2 Cor. 6. 8. Διὰ δόξης, καὶ ἀτιμίας.

Yet

Yet were they much diſturbed at it, were they any-wiſe diſcouraged or ſcared by it from their duty? No; they rather did find ſatisfaction and delight in it; it rather did heighten their mind and ſtrengthen their reſolution; it begat a gallant, and triumphant diſdain of ſuch injuries, enlivening and animating them in their carier of duty; they did embrace reproach for righteouſneſs not only with content as their proper lot and portion from God's providence, but with joy, as their ſpecial glory and happineſs, from divine goodneſs; feeling it moſt true, what our *Maſter* taught; *Bleſſed are ye, when men ſhall revile you, and ſhall ſay all manner of evil againſt you falſly for my ſake: Bleſſed are ye when men---ſhall reproach you, and caſt out your name as evil for the ſon of man's ſake:* and according to St. *Peter*, εἰ ὀνειδίζεσθε, *if ye be reproached for the name of Chriſt* (that is, for conſcionably diſcharging any Chriſtian duty) *happy are ye, for the ſpirit of glory and of God reſteth on you; on their part he is evil ſpoken of, but on your part he is glorified.*

Ὀνειδισμοῖς τε καὶ θλίψεσι θεατριζόμενοι---- Heb. 10. 33. Acts 5. 41. 2 Cor. 12. 10. Εὐδοκῶ ἐν ὕβρεσιν— Matt. 5. 11. Luke 6. 22. 1 Pet. 4. 14.

In fine, it is all reaſon, and it is the expreſs command of God, that in ſuch caſes we ſhould not regard the cenſures, or the reproaches of any mortal; It is a part of duty to deſpiſe obloquy, to expoſe and loſe reputation for God's ſake. For *Hearken* (ſaith he) *unto me ye that know righteouſneſs, the people in whoſe heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings; for the moth ſhall eat them up like a garment, and the worm ſhall eat them like wool; but my righteouſneſs ſhall be for ever, and my ſalvation from generation to generation.* Iſa. 51. 7, 8.

5. Men commonly decline the publick practice of duty out of affectation thereby to be deemed more honeſt and ſincere, or to decline the ſuſpicion of being hypocritical.

As this is the moſt obvious and uſual calumny wherewith diſſolute people do charge good men; ſo to men of generous diſpoſition it is of all cenſures moſt poinant, as moſt croſſing their temper; according to which as they hate to be, ſo they can hardly endure to be counted or called diſſemblers; whence often they chuſe rather to ſeem indifferent to goodneſs, than zealouſly affected to it; they rather wave ſome points of duty, than for the performance of them expoſe themſelves to that imputation.

But this proceeding is very unreaſonable. For,

What can be more abſurd, than to be really and notoriouſly bad (as whoever omitteth his duty is) to prevent a ſurmiſe of being ſuch? or to be truly worſe than we ſhould be, that we may not be deemed worſe than we ſeem?

How can we more gratifie the enemy of our ſalvation, than by approving our ſelves in truth to be what he would falſly challenge us to be, mockers of God, and traitours to our own ſoul?

Is it not a vain thing to regard that kind of cenſure, which it is impoſſible for any man to eſcape, upon other terms, than of being very naughty? for wicked men will never fail to load thoſe with this charge, who will not comply with their follies, and *run with them to the ſame exceſs of riot*, or are any-wiſe better than themſelves; it is inevitable for a ſtaunch man not to be ſtigmatized for a hypocrite by them. 1 Pet. 4. 4.

We have certainly more reaſon to be ſatisfied with the ſure conſcience and ſenſe of our own integrity, than to be moved with the preſumptuous aſſertions of any wretch, devoid of juſtice, or charity: His cenſure being plainly injurious, and contrary to all rules of equity, which preſcribe 2 Cor. 1. 12. 1 John 3. 21.

that

that no man ſhould judge of things unknown, or uncertain, is utterly deſpicable.

1 John 3. 20. 1 Theſſ. 2. 4. Gal. 1. 10. Col. 3. 23. Eph. 6. 5. 1 Cor. 4. 4. Pſal. 37. 4---

The teſtimony of God, (*who is greater than our hearts*) perfectly knowing our ſincerity, may abundantly ſupport us; it is a great wrong to him for us to value the raſh ſuſpicions of men, when we are ſecure of his knowledge, who *ſeeth all our works*, and *trieth our hearts*; who hath ſaid, that *if we commit our way to him*, and *truſt in him*, he *will bring forth our righteouſneſs as the light, and our judgment as the noon day.*

Matt 24. 51.

It is certainly better to be called hypocrite by men for doing our duty, than to be treated as a hypocrite by God for neglecting it; for all thoſe who upon any accompt do violate God's laws, ſhall *have their portion with the hypocrites*, in that diſconſolate place, *where is weeping and gnaſhing of teeth.* And good reaſon; for indeed by thus avoiding hypocriſie, we really do incur it; by ſeeking to preſerve an opinion of ſincerity, we forfeit the reality of it; by the practice of diſavowing the fear of God, and care of goodneſs, we do conſtitute our ſelves certain hypocrites, and impoſtours; diſſembling our thoughts, ſmothering our conſcience, deluding our neighbours with falſe conceits of us, feigning that indifference which we have not, pretending to act without regret or remorſe, which we cannot doe; ſeeming otherwiſe than we are, ſignifying otherwiſe than we mean, doing otherwiſe than we judge fit, or like to doe; that is, if we be not ſtark infidels, or utterly void of conſcience.

This is hypocriſie turned the wrong ſide outward, diſguiſing a man in a fouler ſhape, and uglier garb, than that which is natural and true.

And if we compare the two hypocriſies, (that of pretending conſcience, which we want, and this of denying conſcience which we have; that of ſeeming better than we are, this of ſeeming worſe than we may be) this in nature may well ſeem more vile, in tendency more dangerous, in effect more miſchievous, than the other.

There is in both the ſame falſhood, the ſame prevarication, the like contempt and abuſe of God; but the hypocrite of whom we ſpeak doeth worſe things, more directly wrongfull to God, more prejudicial to goodneſs, more harmfull to the world.

The ſpecious hypocrite counterfeiting goodneſs, and *having a form of godlineſs*, *without the power* and reality *of it*, doth yield to God ſome part (the exteriour part) of his due honour and reſpect; but the ſneaking hypocrite, diſowning goodneſs, doth apparently deſert, ſlight and affront God; the one ſerveth God with his face, and his voice, though *his heart be far from him*; the other doth not ſo much as ſacrifice a carcaſs of obedience to him; That may bring ſome credit and advantage to goodneſs, ſtrengthen its intereſt by his vote and countenance; this by not avowing it doth aſſuredly weaken its reputation and cauſe; That hypocriſie as ſuch is a private, and ſingle evil, whereby a man doth indeed prejudice himſelf, but doth not injure his neighbour, yea may edifie him by the appearing (which in this reſpect is the ſame with the real) goodneſs of his example; but this hypocriſie is a general miſchief, a ſcandalous evil, a contagious peſtilence, whereby a man not onely harmeth himſelf, but wrongeth many others, ſeducing them into diſſoluteneſs, infecting the world with baſe indifference to good, and eaſineſs to comply with ſin.

It is indeed a ſad thing, that God and goodneſs ſhould be deſerted upon this accompt; that moſt men ſhould be ſo uncharitable, ſo unjuſt, ſo imprudent as to ſuſpect all good men of hypocriſie; as if it were incredible that any man ſhould heartily love or fear God; (when it is rather

ſtrange

ſtrange that any man ſhould doe otherwiſe) that any man in good earneſt, or otherwiſe than in pretence and for ſiniſter reſpects ſhould embrace vertue (when it is marvellous, that a reaſonable man ſhould decline it) that ſo many of themſelves inclinable to goodneſs, ſhould be ſo weak as to be deterr'd from it by ſo vain an apprehenſion; and that the name of hypocriſie ſhould drive away piety; that it ſhould become deſirable, that hypocrites might abound in the world, leſt religion both in truth and ſhew ſhould be diſcarded.

In fine, we may otherwiſe ſuppreſs this odious imputation, than by deſerting goodneſs; we may demonſtrate our ſelves ſerious and ſincere by an inflexible adherence to it, in the continual tenour of our practice; and eſpecially in ſome inſtances of duty, which are hardly conſiſtent with hypocriſie, for no man can hold long in a ſtrained poſture; no man will take much pains, or encounter great difficulties, or ſuſtain grievous hardſhips and afflictions, croſs his appetites, forego gains, and honours, for that which he doth not heartily like and love; he may counterfeit in ceremonies and formalities, but he will hardly feign humility, meekneſs, patience, contentedneſs, temperance, at leaſt uniformly and conſtantly. Even the patient enduring this cenſure will confute it, and wipe off the aſperſion of hypocriſie. Matt. 23. 23.

Sermon XXXV.

Provide things honeſt in the ſight of all Men.

2 COR. VIII. 21.

Providing for honeſt things not onely in the ſight of the Lord, but in the ſight of Men.

6. ANother great impediment of good converſation before men is a deſire of ſeeming courteous and civil; Men uſually conform to ſinfull practices, becauſe they would not be held clowns, rude and diſtaſtfull in converſation; they would not give offence to their company, by claſhing with their humour; by preferring their own judgment, and ſeeming to be in their own conceit wiſer and better, than thoſe with whom they converſe; by provoking them to think they are held fools or worſe, by ſuch non-compliance.

This

This is an ordinary ſnare to eaſie and ingenuous natures; but the ground of it is very unreaſonable: For although in matters of indifference, where duty and ſin do not fall into conſideration, to be limber and ductile as can be (which is the temper of the beſt metal) to have no humour of our own, or to reſign up all our humour to the will of our company, to condeſcend unto, and comport with any thing; to raiſe no faction or debate, but preſently to yield to the ſwaying vote; to *become all things to all men* in a ready complaiſance, be wiſedom and good manners, doth argue good nature, good underſtanding, good breeding; is a rightly gentile and obliging quality;

Yet where duty is concerned, where ſinning or not ſinning is the caſe, there courteſie hath no room; there it is vain to pretend any engagement to complaiſance.

For ſurely it is better to be held uncivil, than to be ungodly; it is far better manners to offend any number of men, than to be rude with God, to claſh with his pleaſure, to offer indignity and injury to him; there can be no competition in the caſe; no ſhadow of reaſon, why we ſhould diſpleaſe God to pleaſe men.

As it were more civil to offend ten thouſand Boors (Peaſants) than to affront our King; ſo to offend ten thouſand Kings than to affront our God were in policy more adviſeable, and in equity more juſtifiable; ſo the Royal *Pſalmiſt* did judge; for *Princes* (ſaid he) *did ſit and ſpeak againſt me, but thy ſervant did meditate in thy ſtatutes*; ſo *Moſes*, ſo *Samuel*, ſo *Elias*, ſo *Jeremy*, ſo *Daniel*, ſo the three noble Children, ſo the holy Apoſtles did conceive; who being perſons otherwiſe very courteous and gentle, yet had not that conſideration of mighty Princes, as not rather to approve their conſciences to God, than to comply with their pleaſure, how much leſs ſhould we upon pretence of courteſie toward inferiour perſons in ordinary converſation tranſgreſs our duty?

Pſal. 119. 23. Matt. 10. 18.

Our own intereſt in ſuch caſes is too conſiderable to be ſacrificed to the conceit or pleaſure of any men; Our ſalvation is no matter, wherein formality of reſpect ſhould intervene, or have any weight; to gain or forfeit our eternal happineſs is no buſineſs of complement or ceremony; It were a ſilly courteſie for a man to wait on his company to Hell, a wild point of gallantry to be damned in complaiſance.

Who would take himſelf to be obliged in good manners to hold on the round in a cup of poiſon; to leap down after thoſe, who from blind inadvertency, or wilfull perverſeneſs tumble into a gulf, to gaſh or ſtab himſelf in conformity to ſome deſperate folk? much leſs can a man be engaged out of any ſuch regard, (in compliance with the miſtake, weakneſs, or pravity of others) to incur guilt, to provoke divine wrath, to expoſe his ſoul to utter ruin, to undergo a damage, for which all the world cannot make any reparation or amends?

Is it not far better to diſguſt, than to gratifie thoſe, who have ſo little conſideration of our welfare; who indeed are very diſcourteous and heinouſly rude in offering to tempt us unto ſin, to deſire a compliance therein with them; to expect from us, that we ſhould adventure ſo much for their vain ſatisfaction?

Indeed to gratifie ſuch perſons were great and noble courteſie; but really to doe it, we ſhould not go this way; for this is a ſpurious courteſie, rather conſpiracy and treachery, than courteſie.

It is in truth, at the bottom, great diſcourteſie (involving much unkindneſs, real abuſe, unmercifull inhumanity and cruelty) to ſecond,

to

to countenance, to ſupport or encourage any man in doing that which manifeſtly tendeth unto his great prejudice, to his utter bane.

It is the trueſt civility (implying real humanity, genuine charity, faithfull kindneſs, and tender pity) to ſtand off in ſuch caſes, and by refuſing (in a modeſt, gentle, diſcreet manner refuſing) to concur in ſin with our friends and companions to check them, to warn them, to endeavour their amendment and retreat from pernicious courſes; to exerciſe that *compaſſion* toward them, which S. *Jude* calleth *pulling them out of the fire.* Jud. 22. 23.

In ſuch caſes to repell them, yea to reprove them is the greateſt favour we can ſhew them; it is not onely ſafe for our ſelves, but kind to them to obſerve St. *Paul*'s precept, *Have no fellowſhip with the unfruitfull works of darkneſs, but rather reprove them*; for which deportment whenever they come to themſelves, and ſoberly reflect on things, they will thank and bleſs us; and it will happen, as the *Wiſeman* ſaith, *He that rebuketh a man, afterward ſhall find more favour than he that flatereth with his tongue.* Eph. 5. 11, 7. Prov. 28. 23.

In fine, if we throughly ſcan the buſineſs, we ſhall find that commonly it is not abundance of courteſie, but a defect of charity, or of conſcience, or of courage, which diſpoſeth us to reſervedneſs, or to concurrence upon ſuch occaſions, in regard to unallowable practices.

7. Another ſnare which catcheth and holdeth us in open practice of ſin, or neglect of duty, is deference to the opinion, authority, cuſtome, or example of others; to the common opinion, to the authority of great and leading perſons, to the faſhion of the world, and prevalent humour of the age.

A man (not conſulting or not confiding in his own reaſon) is apt to credit the vogue, to defer a kind of veneration to the general ſentiments of men (eſpecially of men qualified) apprehending that allowable or tolerable, which men commonly by their practice ſeem to approve. He is prone to ſuſpect his own judgment of miſtake, when it doth thwart the opinion of ſo many; and hardly can have the heart to oppoſe his ſingle apprehenſion againſt ſo common notions.

The commonneſs of ſin, and multitude of offenders doth in a manner authorize and warrant it, doth at leaſt ſeem to excuſe and extenuate it. ——*illos Defendit numerus*—

A man eaſily conceiteth himſelf ſafe enough, while he is in the herd, while he walketh in the road, when he hath the broad coverlet of general uſage to ſhrowd him from blame: He doth at leaſt fanſie conſolation in undergoing a doom with ſo many. Juv. *Sat.* 12. 46. Eccluſ. 16. 17.

But upon many accompts, this is a very fallacious and dangerous ground of practice.

For multitudes are no good authours of opinion, or guides of practice. Ant. 9. § 18. 11. § 4. § 3.

Wiſe men have ever been apt to ſuſpect that to be bad, which is moſt commonly admired and affected. *Argumentum peſſimi turba.*

Nothing is more vulgarly noted, than the injudiciouſneſs, the blindneſs, the levity, temerity, and giddineſs of the vulgar; temper, inclination, appetite, intereſt, and the like perverting biaſſes have moſt ſway on them; any ſpecious appearance, any ſlight motive, any light rumour doth ſerve to perſuade them any thing, to drive them any whither. Sen. *de Vit.* B. 2.

All ages have deplored the paucity of wiſe and good men; the genuine diſciples of our Lord, and *ſons of wiſedom* have ever been *puſillus grex*, *a ſmall flock*; Our Lord hath told us, that *Wide is the gate, and broad is the* Matt. 7. 13.

Luke 13. 24. *way that leadeth to deſtruction, and many there be which go in thereat.*
Rom. 9. 27.
Iſa. 10. 22.

Wherefore popular uſe is no good argument of truth or right; nor can yield any warrant, or any colour for infringing God's law; No *plebiſcitum* can be of force againſt it.

God never did allow the people to exempt themſelves or us from their loyalty, or obedience to his laws; they are univerſally obligatory; he
Acts 17. 30. hath *commanded all men to repent*; he hath threatned that otherwiſe *all*
Luke 13. 3. *ſhall periſh*; and that *tribulation and anguiſh* ſhall be *upon every ſoul of man*
Rom. 9. 12. *that doeth evil.*
Rom. 2. 9.

Exod. 23. 2.
Rom. 12. 2. *Be not conformed to this world.*
Iſa. 8. 11.
1 John 2. 15. *Love not the world—*
Iſa. 8. 10.

He by expreſs prohibitions hath obviated all ſuch pretences and pleas; *thou ſhalt not* (ſaith he) *follow a multitude to doe evil*; and, *Say ye not a confederacy--- neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid* (fear not to diſſent and diſcoſt *from the way of this people.*)
Prov. 1. 10. And, *If ſinners entice thee*, (how many ſoever they be, though it be *a*
Iſa. 1. 4. *ſinfull nation, a people laden with iniquity, a ſeed of evil doers*) *conſent thou not.*

Indeed if we conſider it, it is ſo far from excuſing ſin, that it is an aggravation thereof, that we therein conſpire with others, and the more the worſe: To oppoſe God ſingly is not quite ſo criminal, as to join with a rout in hoſtility and rebellion againſt him; for hereby God's authority is more ſhaken, and his honour more rudely violated; hereby we do not onely ſin our ſelves, but contribute to the ſin of others, encourage them to it, and uphold them in it by our patronage.

Hereby we become acceſſory to the degeneracy and general apoſtaſie of the age.

Hereby we do join our forces to pull down God's judgments on our Countrey, and by promoting general corruption induce general vengeance.

The multitude of ſinners is ſo far from ſheltring any one from wrath, that it ſurely draweth it upon all; forcing the Almighty not onely for the aſſertion of his own authority, and vindication of his honour; but
Iſa. 1. 25. for the good of the people, and *purgation of the* world to pour forth re-
I will purge away the droſs,— markable vengeance.

For example, In the time of *Noah* did *God ſpare the old world* when
Gen. 6. 12. *all fleſh had corrupted its way upon the earth*, did that ſtave off God's wrath,
2 Pet. 2. 5. or ſtop the deluge? no, it did grievouſly provoke him, it did in a manner
Gen. 6. 6. neceſſitate him *to deſtroy man from the face of the earth*; *bringing in the*
2 Pet. 2. 5. *floud upon the world of the ungodly.*

2 Pet. 2. 6. Did the number of ſinners in *Sodom* prevent vengeance on them, was it not that which *did condemn them to an overthrow* ſo diſmal, pulling down fire and brimſtone on them?

What was the reaſon of that wofull captivity, into which *Iſrael* was
Jer. 6. 28. carried? was it not becauſe they *were all grievous revolters*; and had ſo
Jer. 5. 1. generally conſpired in wickedneſs, that the *Prophet* could ſay; *Run ye to and fro through the ſtreets of Jeruſalem, and ſee now and know, and ſeek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man; if there be any that executeth judgment, that ſeeketh the truth, and I will pardon it?* was it not this,
Jer. 5. 29. which did wring from God that ſentence, *Shall I not viſit for theſe things? ſhall not my ſoul be avenged on ſuch a nation as this?*

When the caſe is ſuch in any community, as it was in *Iſrael*, when God
Iſa. 1. 6. ſaid, *From the ſoal of the foot even to the head there is no ſoundneſs in it*,
Iſa. 1. 7. then judgment is neceſſary, and it muſt aſſuredly follow, *Your countrey is deſolate---*

deſolate--- then God, his patience being tired, and his goodneſs unſupportably abuſed, will cry out, *Ah I will eaſe me of my adverſaries, and avenge me of mine enemies.*

God as Governour of the world in diſcharge of his office, for clearing his honour, for aſſuring his majeſty, out of regard to publick good, for the ſafety and welfare of his ſubjects is concerned to chaſtiſe notorious, ſcandalous and infectious ſin: He may reſerve private ſins for the final doom, when *the hidden things of darkneſs ſhall be brought to light, and the counſels of hearts manifeſted*, and all things ſhall receive juſt award and recompence; but it is expedient to puniſh publick ſins publickly: they who *declare their ſin as Sodom*, with outrageous impudence, are like to find a puniſhment like that in a common vengeance. 1 Cor. 4. 15. Iſa. 3. 9.

We ſhould therefore in ſuch a caſe be the more carefull of our converſation, more ſhy of ſinfull compliance with others, for preventing publick calamity; for that our ſingle piety and innocence (or the goodneſs of a few may ſave our Countrey together with our ſelves from wrath and ruine; ſeeing it is the gratious method of God in regard to a few righteous men to ſpare the reſt; to releaſe a Nation from deſerved puniſhment; for if in *Sodom* had been found ten righteous perſons, it had eſcaped that horrible deſtruction; And *Iſrael* in *Hezekiah*'s time, (although in a very great and general corruption of that age) by a few good men did avoid the like doom; according to that of the *Prophet*, *Except the Lord of hoſts had left unto us a very ſmall remnant, we ſhould have been as Sodom.* Gen. 38. 32. Iſa. 1. 9. Lam. 3. 22.

The righteouſneſs of one *Noah* did ſave the race of mankind from being extinct;

The zeal of one *Phinehas* did ſtop that plague, which had devoured *Iſrael*; *Phinehas* (ſaid God himſelf) *the ſon of Eleazar hath turned my wrath away from the children of Iſrael; while he was zealous for my ſake among them, that I conſumed not the children of Iſrael in my jealouſie.* Num. 25. 11. Pſal. 106. 30.

If there had been ſuch another publick Patron of piety, at the time, when *Iſrael* was ſo ſeverely puniſhed by deliverance into captivity, it would have obſtructed that lamantable event; God himſelf ſo teſtified; for *I ſought* (ſaid he) *for a man among them, that would make up the hedge, and ſtand in the gap before me for the land, that I ſhould not deſtroy it; but I found none; therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them*--- and *Run ye to and fro*--- (ſaid he again) *Seek---if ye can find a man--- in Jeruſalem--- and I will pardon it.* Ezek. 22. 30, 31. Jer. 5. 1.

Wherefore beſide regard to our own welfare, a conſideration of publick good, charity toward the World, a compaſſion of our Countrey ſhould withhold us from conſpiring in common tranſgreſſions, or omiſſions of duty.

If we ſin with all, we muſt ſuffer with all; nor will the having ſo much company in ſuffering yield any true comfort to us; *Socios habuiſſe doloris* (to have companions in ſorrow) is in it ſelf a pitifull ſolace, and an unworthy one, ſavouring of inhumane malignity; for our fellows will bear no ſhare with us, or take off any thing from the burthen of our pains, which will be equally to them and us extreme. *God will not overſee us.* Eccleſ. 16. 17.

Can it be any conſiderable ſatisfaction, that we are ſick of an epidemical diſeaſe, that ſweepeth away multitudes about us and with us?

Is it better for one part, that the whole body is overſpread with a noiſome leproſie? that its fellow-members are tortured with grievous anguiſh?

Can the ſoreſt pains of our brethren cure the akings of our heart, aſſwage the pangs of our conſcience, or ſlack the conſuming flames beneath?

What advantage can we enjoy from going down to Hell in a troop? what eaſe ſhall we find there from being encompaſſed with the dolefull groans, the piercing ſhrieks, and diſmal howlings of fellow-ſufferers in that infernal dungeon?

Alas, will it not rather augment our pains to hear the ſore complaints, the fierce accuſations, the deſperate curſes of thoſe, whom our compliance hath engaged, or encouraged, or confirmed and hardned in that wicked practice, which did throw them into that diſconſolate caſe?

8. Another Principle (near of kin to the former) is a diſlike of ſingularity, and ſolitude; together with the conſequences and imputations uſually cleaving thereto.

One would not be a man by himſelf; to be gazed on, to be hooted at as a kind of prodigy, to be deemed an extravagant, odd, humorous, fantaſtick perſon, conceited of his own opinion, addicted to his own way, arrogating to himſelf a liberty of croſſing and condemning, or contemning the world; therefore he runneth along with the age, complying with its ſinfull cuſtoms, and naughty faſhions.

He is grievous unto us even to behold; for his life is not like other mens, his ways are of another faſhion. Sap. 2. 15. &c.

But this is a vain Principle; for really to be ſingular is no fault, to be held ſo is no diſgrace; it is rather in many caſes laudable and honourable; and if in any, moſt reaſonable 'tis in this.

Doth not ſingularity, or paucity encreaſe the price and eſtimation of every valuable thing? what maketh a jewel but rarity, what but that maketh a diamant more pretious than a peble?

Do not men for ſingular eminency in any art, skill, faculty, endowment, gain credit and renown? what recommended to poſterity the names of *Apelles*, *Praxitiles*, *Phidias*, but excelling in their art beyond the ordinary rate? what gave to *Demoſthenes* and *Cicero* their eſteem, but a ſingular knack of eloquence? to what did *Alexander* and *Cæſar* owe their fame, but to an extraordinary valour? whence got *Socrates* ſuch a name, but from his ſingular wiſedom? whence *Fabricius*, *Ariſtides*, *Cato*, but from their ſingular integrity?

Why then ſhould it be a diſcouragement or reproach to be ſingular or extraordinary in the nobleſt of all faculties, that of living well, in the moſt excellent of all perfections, that of vertue?

In truth a man is hardly capable of a greater commendation than this, that he is ſingularly good; that he ſurpaſſeth the vulgar level, and mounteth near Heaven in the divineſt qualities; that no bad example or faſhion hath been able to ſeduce or corrupt him; this ſhould render him to be moſt highly eſteemed, and moſt dearly cheriſhed, as a choice ornament of the world, as a moſt uſefull inſtrument of good to mankind.

It were deſirable that vertue were more common in the world, but ſurely its being more rare doth render it more admirable, more illuſtrious, more glorious.

Heroical vertue is therefore ſuch, becauſe ſo few do attain, or can reach it;

——pauci quos æquos amavit
Jupiter,

A few

A few, who by ſpecial aſſiſtence of God's grace, and by extraordinary reſolution do ſurmount the obſtacles, which are ſet againſt it.

It was well ſaid of St. *Bernard*, *To be good among good men hath ſafety, but to be ſuch among bad men hath alſo praiſe*; (a man will be ſaved by that, but he ſhould be commended for this) *that hath as much facility as it hath ſecurity, this is of as much worth as difficulty.*

Inter bonos, bonus eſſe ſalutem habet, inter malos verò & laudem; illud tantæ facilitatis eſt, quanta & ſecuritatis; hoc tantæ virtutis, quantæ & difficultatis. Bern. *Ep.* 25.

Indeed if we conſider the nature of things, or conſult the hiſtory of times, we ſhall find that vertue muſt be, and ever hath been liable to this imputation; it is commonly ſo hard and hazardous to be good in any notable degree, that few will take the pains, or undergo the hardſhips requiſite to attain, or exerciſe it.

Hence the beſt men, (who are ſuch not according to the blind conjecture of men, but in God's ſure eſteem) are an elect, and peculiar ſort of people, a few choice perſons cull'd out of a great lump of thoſe, who either reject Religion, or embrace it onely in verbal profeſſion, or formal ſhew. 1 Pet. 2. 9.

Hence it hath been the obſervation, and complaint of all times,

Rari quippe boni. Juv. *Sat.* 13.

Hence the moſt renowned men for goodneſs, and who by God's ſpecial care have been recommended to us as patterns thereof, have been very ſingular in it; and their ſingularity did much enhance the price of their goodneſs. 28.

It is ſaid of *Enoch* that *he walked with God*; but it ſeemeth with ſmall, or no company beſide; otherwiſe it would not have been ſo particularly recorded of him. Gen. 5. 22.

Noah was content to be a man by himſelf, *a preacher of righteouſneſs* againſt the vogue, and a practiſer thereof againſt the ſtream of his whole age; for *thee* (ſaid God of him, that is, thee alone) *have I ſeen righteous before me in this generation:* He was no leſs ſingular in his goodneſs, than in his ſalvation. Gen. 7. 1.

Abraham had no common qualities, which moved God to pick him out, and ſeparate him from the reſt of mankind (to ſingle him *from his kindred and countrey*) to confer ſpecial graces and bleſſings on him. Gen. 12. 1.

Lot had *his righteous ſoul vexed with the filthy converſation of the wicked*, which did encloſe him, yet ſo that he did retain a ſound and clear integrity among them. 2 Pet. 2. 7.

Job had this teſtimony from God, examining *Satan* concerning him, *Haſt thou conſidered my ſervant Job, that there is none like him on the earth; a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and eſcheweth evil?* Job 1. 8.

What was the reſolution of *Joſhua*, did he value being ſole or ſingular in his practice? no, for propounding to his people whether they would chuſe God or not, he told them that however it were, although all of them ſhould forſake God, he was reſolved to ſtick faſt to him, not regarding their practice, *But* (ſaid he) *as for me and my houſe, we will ſerve the Lord*; that indeed was nobly reſolved; it was a reſolution worthy of ſuch an *Heroe*, to ſtand alone in ſo good and wiſe a choice againſt his whole Nation. It was a reſolution ſutable to that his behaviour, which he expreſſed in theſe words, *My brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt, but I wholly followed the Lord my God*; in regard to which his camerade *Caleb*, being of the ſame ſpirit with him, is called a Joſh. 24. 15. Joſh. 14. 8.

man

Num. 14. 24. man *of another ſpirit*; different from, and above the mean ſpirit of his fellows.

What was *David*? was he not a man by himſelf? was he not like one, of whom the Poet ſaith,

Juv. Sat. 13. *Egregium ſanctumque virum ſi cerno, bimembri*
Hoc monſtrum puero, vel fœtæ comparo mulæ?

* A Wonder, N. Tr.
Pſal. 71. 7. 119. 51.
1 Pet. Ἐν ᾧ ξενίζ. So he telleth us, *I* (ſaith he) *am become as it were a* * *monſter unto many, but my ſure truſt is in thee.*

Did *Elias*, to ſhun the imputation of ſingularity, or in regard to common practice, ſwerve from his faithfull adherence to God's ſervice; al-
1 King. 19. 10. though he did paſſionately reſent, and bewail his caſe? No, for *I have*, ſaid he, *been very jealous for the Lord of hoſts; for the Children of Iſrael have forſaken thy Covenant, thrown down thine Altars, and ſlain thy Prophets with the ſword; and I, even I onely am left, and they ſeek my life to take it away.*

Lam. 3. 14. What was the caſe of *Jeremy*? *I* (ſaith he) *was a deriſion to all my people, and their ſong all the day*; yet did he maintain his integrity, and was
Jer. 1. 18. *a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and a brazen wall againſt the whole land;*
Murus aheneus. *againſt the Kings of Judah, againſt the Princes thereof, and againſt the people of the land.*

What was the condition of our *Lord*? was not he σημεῖον ἀντιλεγόμενον,
Luke 2. 34. *a prodigy ſpoken againſt* by all, againſt whom *both Herod and Pontius Pi-*
Heb. 12. 3. *late, with the Gentiles, and the People of Iſrael were gathered together;*
Acts 4. 27. Iſa. 63. 3. who *trod the wine-preſs alone, and of the people there was none with him;*
Joh. 12. 37--- John 16. 32. who in his life was regarded by few, and at his death (when he yielded
Matt. 26. 31, 56. his great atteſtation to truth and righteouſneſs) was deſerted by all?

What was the *Apoſtles* condition? were they not ſingular men? were
Acts 28. 22. not they held *a Sect, every-where ſpoken againſt*, and impugned with all
2 Cor. 4. 9. violence of ſpirit and rage? were not they *made a ſpectacle to the world*, to
Heb. 10. 33. be gazed at with ſcorn and reproach? did not they (a few, ſimple, poor,
1 Cor. 1. 26. weak folk) in doctrine and practice croſs and controll the world, confuting, reproving, condemning the generality of men, of errour, of folly, of wickedneſs?

It can therefore be no juſt blame or reaſonable diſcouragement to appear ſingular in the practice of vertue.

Such a ſingularity is no good argument of fond conceitedneſs, of wilfull humour, of arrogant pride. For,

Can it be fond conceitedneſs to follow the dictates of the beſt reaſon, to obſerve the advices of the wiſeſt men in all times, to follow the direction and conduct of infinite wiſedom; to embrace that which in moſt caſes natural light, common ſenſe, and continual experience do approve? Is it not wildneſs to doe otherwiſe, though all ſhould doe it?

Can it be wilfull humour to hold faſt our beſt intereſt, our trueſt comfort, our eternal ſalvation? Is it not rather ſo, to comply with *a perverſe generation* in running headlong to their own ruin?

Can it be pride, or arrogance to acknowledge our Maker; to be loyal and dutifull to our heavenly Sovereign; to fear the Almighty God, to ſubmit to his will, to *tremble at his word*, to *be afraid of his judgments*, to ſhun his fierce anger and ſevere vengeance?

Is it a bad ambition to ſeek that honour and immortal glory, which God doth offer, to ſhun that everlaſting ſhame and contempt, which he doth menace?

Is

Is it not rather monſtrous preſumption, and enormous vanity to conſort and conſpire with rebels againſt God's law, with deſpiſers of his grace?

In fine, when the moſt men are fooliſh and vain, when the world is depraved and diſſolute, it is neceſſary that the beſt reaſon ſhould be called humour, and the wiſeſt men ſhould be deemed extravagant; that the beſt things ſhould be ſlighted, and the beſt perſons repreſented with odious characters; but hence to renounce wiſedom and goodneſs is abominably abſurd: as if we ſhould therefore put out our light, becauſe it is night about us; or in deep winter ſhould put off our cloaths among the wild *Indians*.

9. Of affinity to the foregoing Principles is this moſt plauſible apology for ſmothering our conſcience, namely, a prudential apprehenſion, that we ſhall not come off well in openly avowing and abetting goodneſs, ſo as to doe any good, or ſervice to it thereby; but ſhall thereby rather work prejudice and diſſervice to it.

The Age (will ſuch a wiſe man ſay) is incorrigibly degenerate; wickedneſs is not onely bold and impudent, but even outrageouſly inſolent; ſo that to appear ſtrictly good is a kind of ſcandal, to pretend conſcience for our rule of action is to be ridiculous, to patronize duty is to provoke ſcorn and obloquy; to mention religion is to proſtitute and profane it; to concern God in our doing is to expoſe his moſt ſacred and venerable name to irriſion and foul abuſe. Job 12. 4.

Such is the poſture of things, that of all the ſects and factions which divide the world, that of *Epicurean* ſcorners and mockers is become the moſt formidable; with diſdainfull pride inſulting and vapouring over the profeſſours of religion, perſecuting all ſoberneſs of mind and ſtaunchneſs of manners with a fierce rage, and a kind of *Satanick* zeal.

The ſtate of the world being like to that, when the holy *Pſalmiſt* cried out, *Lord, how long ſhall the wicked, how long ſhall the wicked triumph? How long ſhall they utter and ſpeak hard things, and all the workers of iniquity boaſt themſelves?* Pſal. 94. 3, 4. 52. 1. 10. 3.

In ſuch a caſe, is it not ſeaſonable to obſerve our *Lord*'s advice, *not to give that which is holy unto dogs, nor to caſt our pearls before ſwine*; not to expoſe good doctrine, and holy practice to ſcurrilous and ſenſual people; who will ſnarl and bark at it, will ſcorn and trample on it, will bite and tear you for it.) Matt. 7. 6.

Is it not then wiſedom rather fairly to retreat, withdrawing our vertue into a ſafe retirement, than by openly conteſting for it againſt overmatching forces to hazard its being baffled, and abuſed, its being trampled on, and triumphed over, by ſcornfull pride and malice?

In ſuch a world to oppoſe impiety, what is it but attempting to ſtop a torrent, to allay a ſtorm, to gape againſt an oven, to blow againſt the wind, to kick againſt the pricks?

But if this caſe be rightly weighed; it rather ſtrongly may engage us to an open profeſſion and practice of the ſtricteſt vertue, than excuſe us from it.

St. *Paul* doth enjoin us *to walk accurately, not as fools, but as wiſe, redeeming the time*, for this reaſon, *becauſe the days are evil*; and *that we ſhould be blameleſs and harmleſs, the ſons of God without rebuke in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe nation, ſhining among them as lights in the world*; *and* * *holding forth the word of life.* Eph. 5. 15. Phil. 2. 5. * (or holding faſt, Ἐπέχοντες.)

And

And great reaſon for it; for the worſe the world is, the more need there is of good patterns to inſtruct and guide it, to admoniſh and excite it to goodneſs.

If the days are evil, it is high time, that we ſhould apply our beſt endeavours to the mending of them.

Spectа juvenи—in ea tempora natus es, quibus formare animum expediat conſtantibus exemplis. Tac. *Ann.* 16.

If vertue be ſo near loſt, or ſo quite gone from among us, it is needfull that we ſhould preſently ſeek to recover, or to retrieve it.

If goodneſs be ſo hardly preſſed by oppoſition, then hath every good man the more reaſon to appear ſtrenuouſly in its defence, the more are we engaged to haſten with all our might to its relief and ſuccour from irrecoverable oppreſſion.

Every one ſhould labour to raiſe a bank againſt that inundation, which threatneth to overthrow and overwhelm all.

Shall we endure to ſee the adverſary of our welfare to carry all before him without any oppoſition or obſtruction? Shall we ſuffer iniquity to enjoy a quiet reign, to root and ſettle it ſelf in its uſurpation, to raiſe it ſelf a title of long occupancy and preſcription againſt goodneſs?

Is it not then more generous to avow our friendſhip to vertue, and to abet it in our patronage, when it is under the hatches, and crieth for our aid? is it not vile treachery in ſuch a caſe to deſert it?

Is it not gallant then *to reſiſt ſin*, and check wickedneſs, when it is ſo high and rampant?

Who will not be vertuous (or endeavour at leaſt to appear ſuch) when vertue is in faſhion and requeſt; when it flouriſheth in reputation, when all the world doth countenance and abet it? who will not ſhun or diſown wickedneſs, when it is commonly odious and deſpicable? who will *not help the Lord againſt* weak adverſaries?

Jud. 5. 23.

But to embrace vertue upon greateſt diſadvantages, to diſclaim vice in its triumphant proſperity, this is indeed brave and maſculine.

He is a worthy man indeed who can keep the field among ſo many ſtout enemies, who can ſtand upright *in a crooked generation*; who can deſpiſe the ſcorn, defie the rage, bear up againſt the impudence and malignity of vain, baſe, wretched men, combining to ſupplant and extirpate goodneſs.

Nor have we reaſon in proceeding thus to deſpair of good ſucceſs; we need not fear thereby to expoſe the credit, or endanger the intereſt of goodneſs. For,

How can we fail of proſpering in the maintenance of God's cauſe, and ſpecial concern? although men may commonly deſert him, yet doth he not utterly forſake them, or give over the government of the world; he may let the reins lie a little looſe, but he doth not put them out of his hands; his power cannot be abated, his providence can never ſleep; though he is ſo patient in ſuffering wicked men to provoke him, yet he will not be *ſlack* in aſſiſting good men, who take his part, and undertake to maintain his honour; Aſſuredly he will help them, who *help him againſt the mighty.*

Deut. 32. 30. Joſh. 23. 10. Num. 25. 3. Jer. 1. 19. 15. 20. 20. 11.

In this ſervice *one will chaſe a thouſand, and two put ten thouſand to flight*; One *David* will knock down never ſo many Philiſtines reproaching God's name; One *Phinehaz* will repreſs the petulancy of a whole Nation; One *Jeremy* ſhall be *a brazen wall againſt a whole land*; God will make it good to ſuch an one, *They ſhall fight againſt thee, but they ſhall not prevail againſt thee; for I am with thee, ſaith the Lord, to deliver thee.*

One

One ſober man in defence of vertue is able to diſcomfit all the Hectors, the huffing Blades, and boiſterous Ruffians in the world; attaquing them with ſound diſcretion, and ſteady reſolution: for all their bravery and confidence, they are eaſily mated, and being like their Sire, if you *reſiſt them, they will flee from you:* a prudent, ſeaſonable, ſmart check will quaſh their ſpurious courage, and giddy audacity. Their contempt of goodneſs is but feigned; they cannot really for their hearts deſpiſe it; there is ſtamped on their ſouls and conſciences ſuch a reſpect, ſuch an awe thereof, which they cannot quite race out; wherefore if you briskly repreſent it to them, and challenge their reverence to it, they cannot but ſuccumb, their own mind and conſcience joining to back your reproof; ſo that if you cannot reclaim them, you ſhall however repreſs them; if you cannot correct their vice, you ſhall yet confound their impudence; *For ſo* (ſaith St. *Peter*) *it is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to ſilence the ignorance of fooliſh men*; and, *Having a good conſcience, that whereas they ſpeak evil of you, as of evil doers, they may be aſhamed that falſly accuſe your converſation in Chriſt.*

Jam. 4. 7.

Jer. 20. 11. 1 Pet. 2. 15. 3. 16. Tit. 2. 8.

It is onely a ſneaking, or a timorous pretence to vertue, which they contemn, but they will admire thoſe who ſtiffly adhere to it, and ſtoutly maintain it.

We ſhall therefore expoſe vertue, not by frankly avowing it, but by faintly ſlinking from it, when occaſion requireth an open acknowledgment and exemplary practice of it.

If the world is ſo very bad, it will not be worſe for our attempt to better it, it will be ſo much at leaſt better, that one therein hath that worthy purpoſe.

It was bad, when *Noah* preached righteouſneſs to it.

It was bad, when *Elias* was ſo zealous for the Lord of hoſts.

It was bad, when *Jeremy* was derided for declaring God's will, and exhorting to repentance.

They were very bad times, when all the Prophets did ſtrive ſo earneſtly to reclaim men from their wickedneſs; being reproached and perſecuted for doing ſo, but not deterred from doing it; the reſentment they had of the badneſs of times did not make them abandon the means of its recovery from it.

The whole world did lie in wickedneſs when the Apoſtles did undertake the reformation of it.

1 John 5. 19.

In fine, if men generally upon ſuch accompts of diſpairing prudence neglect to own goodneſs, what muſt the conſequence be? what, but that piety ſhall be caſhiered, that vertue ſhall be diſcarded, that conſcience ſhall be quite exploded and exterminated from the world; that conſequently an horrible deluge of various miſchiefs, a general prevalence of lewdneſs and luxury, of fraud and violence, of faction and tumult; a violation of all faith and friendſhip, a diſſolution of all order and peace will enſue?

None calleth for juſtice, nor any pleadeth for truth— Iſa. 59. 4.

And what muſt grow upon this ſtate of things? what but another floud of judgments, and wofull vengeance; when God's patience hath been tried to the utmoſt, and his goodneſs tired with bearing ſuch a load of abominations, he will be forced to cry out, *Shall I not viſit for theſe things? ſhall not my ſoul be avenged on ſuch a nation as this?*

Jer. 5. 29. Iſa. 1. 24. 59. 17.

10. Another Principle of diſpenſing with conſcience in publick duties, and converſation before men, is a kind of perverſe wiſedom, or ſubtile craft, affecting the name of diſcretion.

Stulta calliditas, perverſè imitata prudentiam. Cic. *de Offic.* 3. p. 143.

Men ſee there are divers inconveniences attending the profeſſion of reſpect to God and conſcience in all their doings; that the world may diſlike and diſeſteem them, that divers perſons will hate, malign, reproach and perſecute them for it; that they may chance to be croſſed in their deſigns, and loſe profits and preferments thereby; therefore they deem it adviſeable to decline it in open view, making up the defect by adoring and ſerving God in private.

Thus they think to ſalve all, by maintaining a neutrality, and compounding the buſineſs, yielding an open conformity to the world, and reſerving a ſecret regard to God; ſinning publickly, and privately repenting; retaining their credit, quiet, eaſe, pleaſure with their conſcience, and peace of mind: affecting ſome piety, but avoiding the ſcandal of it.

Gal. 5. 11.

They would hold fair with both ſides, ſo that neither the world ſhould perſecute them for croſſing its humour, nor God puniſh them for tranſgreſſing his will.

They drive a ſubtile trade, hoping to gain on all hands, both the benefits of the other, and the advantages of this world; to ſave their ſoul, and ſerve their worldly intereſt together:

This they would believe a point of ſpecial wiſedom; preſcribed by *Solomon, Be not righteous overmuch, neither make thy ſelf over-wiſe, for why ſhouldeſt thou deſtroy thy ſelf? Be not overmuch wicked, neither be thou fooliſh, why ſhouldeſt thou die before the time?*

Eccles. 7. 16, 17.

But this rooking trick, to hedge thus, and ſave ſtakes, to play faſt and looſe, to dodge and ſhuffle with God, God doth not like, nor will ſuffer himſelf to be gull'd with it.

He will not be ſatisfied with ſuch a mongrel, partial, and *halting* ſervice.

1 Kings 18. 21.

He will not allow us to withhold that half of his ſervice (the external, viſible part thereof) which is moſt honourable to him, and moſt beneficial to our neighbour.

He cannot endure a double heart, or a double face; one looking upward to Heaven, another downward to the Earth.

Pſal. 12. 2. Jam. 1. 8. 4. 8.
2 Chron. 12. 33.
1 Tim. 3. 8. Δίγλωσσ.
Pſal. 38. 37. *Their heart was not whole with him.* (O. Tr.)
Deut. 18. 13. Job 1. 8.
Pſal. 44. 18. 119. 51.
2 Chron. 34. 2. Job 23. 11.
Matt. 6. 24. Luke 16. 13. } Δυσὶ κυρίοις.

He exacteth from us an integrity of heart, and perfection of obedience; that we ſhould love him with our whole heart, that we ſhould be *perfect with him*, that we ſhould walk uprightly, not *declining to the right hand or left* from our duty.

He will not endure, that we ſhould hold amity, or correſpondence with his enemies; particularly with the world, the friendſhip whereof he hath declared inconſiſtent with his favour; and that it is a ſpiritual adultery to impart any of our affections to it; according to that of St. *James, Ye adulterers, and adultereſſes; know ye not that the friendſhip of the world is enmity with God; ſo that whoſoever will be a friend of the world, becometh the enemy of God.*

Jam. 4. 3. 1 John 2. 15. Καθίσασαι. (John 15. 19. 17. 14.)

Pſal. 37. 38. O. Tr.
Phil. 2. 5.

We may ſhift as well as we can in the world, provided that we hold innocence, and do not conſpire with it againſt God, by violation of our duty to him. *Be wiſe as ſerpents, innocent as doves*, Matt. 10. 16. (*As lambs*, Luke 10. 3.)

Rom. 16. 19. Σοφὺς εἰς τὸ ἀγαθὸν, ἀκεραίους δὲ εἰς τὸ κακόν.

They reproach good men as ſuperſtitious; who are afraid of inviſible powers; who let go things in hand (preſent intereſts and pleaſures) for a reverſion and hope.

As

As if God's word were not ſufficient ſecurity: as if we may not as well relie upon things conſpicuous to reaſon, as thoſe which are obvious to ſenſe.

If Chriſtianity be plainly falſe, they ſay well; but if it be true, very abſurdly; yea, if probable, very imprudently; yea, if poſſible, not wiſely. Ἄτοπ. 2 Theſſ. 3. 2.

They charge conſcientious men with timorouſneſs, faint-heartedneſs.

It is timorouſneſs or blameable fear to dread things without reaſon, things no-wiſe formidable, which cannot hurt us; ſuch a timorous man is he, that out of fear of men, (of diſpleaſing them, of ſuffering by them, of their reproach, &c.) tranſgreſſeth his duty.

But to fear God is wiſedom, ſoberneſs, duty, vertue; 'tis handſome and honourable, becoming our nature, our condition; the paſſion of fear was chiefly put in us for this purpoſe, as its beſt uſe.

Is it courage, and not rather madneſs to provoke, to reſiſt, to challenge, to cope with the Almighty? Is it courage to throw ones ſelf down a precipice, to leap into the infernal lake? Is it gallantry to dare tranſgreſs all reaſon and ſobriety? Is it brave to be wild and ſenſeleſs, &c?

It is true courage to reſiſt and repell ſin aſſaulting a man with whatever advantages; to dare to doe well, although vain men deride, and ſpitefull men hate us for it.

It is a kind of martyrdom, to be ill uſed by the world for adhering to his duty, and he hath a ſhare in that, *Bleſſed are they, who ſuffer for righteouſneſs.*

In fine, it is a vain prudence, to be thus politick with God; whereby we ſhall loſe the whole, or that part which is invaluable, out of preſumption to ſave a ſmall inconſiderable part. Matt. 10. 39. Ὁ εὑρὼν τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτῆς, ἀπολέσει αὐτήν.

If this be prudence, *then* (as St. *Paul* ſaith) *is the offence of the croſs ceaſed.* Gal. 5. 11.

Then our Lord preſcribed a fooliſh condition. Matt. 10. 38. 16. 24.

Then were the Apoſtles very imprudent, who deſerted all, and ſuffered ſo much for their conſcience; being content to ſecure their ſpiritual intereſt, and to obtain the eternal rewards of piety; *chuſing the better part, which could not be taken from them.* Phil. 3. 8. Luke 10. 42.

What the true wiſedom is in ſuch caſes St. *James* hath told us, *Who is a wiſe man, and endowed with knowledge among you? let him ſhew out of a good converſation his works with meekneſs of wiſedom.* Jam. 3. 13.

Sermon XXXVI.

Of the Goodneſs of GOD.

PSAL. CXLV. 9.

The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works.

THE goodneſs of God is a frequented theme; to many perhaps it may ſeem vulgar and trite; ſo that diſcourſe thereon, like a ſtory often told, may be nauſeous to their ears: but in truth neither can we ſpeak too much upon this moſt excellent ſubject, nor ought we ever to be weary in hearing about it; for 'tis a ſign that the palate of our mind is diſtempered, if we do not with delight and affection reliſh any mention of divine goodneſs. Yea, the obſervation of mens common practice would induce us to think, that either this point is not ſo well known, or but little believed, or at leaſt not well conſidered and applied. For how could we be ſo void of love to God, of gratitude toward him, of faith and hope in him, were we throughly perſuaded, did we ſeriouſly conſider, that He is ſo exceedingly good toward us? how can we be ſo inſenſible of the benefits we enjoy, ſo diſtruſull of finding ſuccours and ſupplies in our need, ſo diſſatisfied and diſcontented with what befalls us, if we conceive and weigh, that all things do proceed from, are guided and governed by immenſe goodneſs? how alſo, if men have ſuch an opinion of God impreſſed on their minds, comes it to paſs, that they are ſo little carefull to reſemble and imitate him in kindneſs, bounty and mercy to one another? how is it in fine, that the moſt powerfull argument to all manner of good practice, and the mightieſt aggravation of ſin, if well known and pondered, hath ſo little force and efficacy upon us? from experience therefore this argument may ſeem ſcarce ſufficiently inculcated. We may add, that diſcourſe upon this Attribute (which above all other Attributes doth render God peculiarly admirable, and amiable) hath this ſpecial advantage beyond other diſcourſes, that it doth, if our hearts conſpire therewith, approach moſt nearly to the formal exerciſe of the moſt high and heavenly parts of devotion, praiſe and thankſgiving; that it more immediately conduces to the breeding, the nouriſhing, the augmenting in us the beſt and nobleſt of pious affections, love and reverence to God? truſt and hope in him; willing reſolutions to pleaſe and ſerve him; whence is conſequent, that we cannot too much employ our thoughts, our words, or our attention upon this point. Beſide ſo much reaſon, we have alſo good example to countenance us in ſo doing: we have the precedent of the

——Θεὸς, ἓ πολλῶν ὄγλων, ἐφ' οἷς θαυμάζεσθαι, ἐδὲν ἔπως ὡς τὸ πάγλας εὐεργέτειν ἰδιώτατον. Naz. Orat. 26.

the holy *Pſalmiſt* reſolving to make it his conſtant and continual employment: *I will ſing* (ſaith he) *of the mercies of the Lord; with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulneſs to all generations.* Pſal. 89. 1. And, *Every day will I bleſs thee, and I will praiſe thy name for ever, and ever*; Pſal. 145. 2. that bleſſing and praiſing God the Context ſhews to have conſiſted eſpecially in the declaration of God's great goodneſs) and, *It is a good thing* (ſaith he again) *to give thanks unto the Lord, and to ſing praiſes unto thy name, O thou moſt High; to ſhew forth thy loving kindneſs in the morning, and thy faithfulneſs every night.* Pſal. 92. 1. Such were his intentions, and ſuch his judgment about this practice; and we find him in effect true and anſwerable to them; Every ſong of his, every meditation, every exerciſe of devotion chiefly harping upon this ſtring; and he earneſtly wiſhes that others would conſent and conſort with him therein: he earneſtly exhorts and excites them thereto: *O that men would praiſe the Lord for his goodneſs, and for his wonderfull works to the children of men.* Pſal. 107. 8. *Praiſe the Lord, O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever.* Pſal. 106. 1. That one example might ſufficiently authorize this practice; but we have innumerable others, and thoſe the higheſt that can be, to encourage and engage us thereto; even the whole Choire of Heaven, whoſe perpetual buſineſs and happy entertainment it is to contemplate with their minds, to celebrate with their voices the immenſe goodneſs of God; *they have* (as it is in the *Revelation*) *no reſt day or night from performing this office.* Apoc. 4. 8. Such is the ſubject of our diſcourſe; the which our Text moſt plainly and fully expreſſes; aſſerting not onely the goodneſs of God; but the univerſal and boundleſs extent thereof: *The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies* (or *his bowels of affection and pity*) *are over all his works.* And that God indeed is ſuch, we ſhall firſt endeavour to declare, then ſhall briefly apply the conſideration thereof to practice.

That God the Lord, and Maker of all things is of himſelf, in regard to all his creatures, eſpecally to us men, ſuperlatively good, that is diſpoſed never without juſt or neceſſary cauſe to harm us, and inclinable to doe us all poſſible and befitting good, the univerſal frame of nature, and the conſtant courſe of providence do afford us ſufficient reaſon to conceive, and moſt frequent, moſt expreſs teſtimonies of holy Scripture do more fully demonſtrate. There is no argument from natural effects diſcernible by us, which proveth God's exiſtence, (and innumerable ſuch there are, every ſort of things well ſtudied may afford ſome) the which doth not together perſuade God to be very kind and benign; carefull to impart to us all befitting good, ſuitable to our natural capacity and condition; and unwilling that any conſiderable harm, any extreme want or pain ſhould befall us (I interpoſe ſuch limitations, for that an abſolute, or univerſal and perpetual exemption from all kinds, or all degrees of inconvenience, an accumulation of all ſorts of appearing good upon us doth not become, or ſute our natural ſtate of being, or our rank in perfection among creatures; neither all things being duly ſtated, and computed, will it turn to beſt accompt for us.) The beſt (no leſs convincing, than obvious) arguments, aſſerting the exiſtence of a Deity are deduced from the manifold and manifeſt footſteps of admirable wiſedom, skill and deſign apparent in the general order, and in the particular frame of creatures; the beautifull harmony of the whole, and the artificial contrivance of each part of the world; the which 'tis hardly poſſible that any unprejudiced and undiſtempered mind ſhould conceive to proceed from blind chance,

chance, or as blind neceſſity. But with this wiſedom are always complicated no leſs evident marks of goodneſs. We cannot in all that vaſt bulk of the creation, and numberleſs variety of things diſcover any piece of mere pomp, or dry curioſity; every thing ſeems to have ſome beneficial tendency; according to which it confers ſomewhat to the need, convenience, or comfort of thoſe principal creatures, which are endewed with ſenſe and capacity to enjoy them. Moſt of them have a palpable relation to the benefit (to the ſubſiſtence, or delight) of living creatures; and eſpecially in an ultimate relation to the benefit of man; and the reſt, although their immediate uſe be not to our dim ſight ſo diſcernible, may therefore be reaſonably preſumed in their natural deſignation to regard the ſame end. Wherefore as upon conſideration of that ample proviſion, which is made in nature for the neceſſary ſuſtenance, defence and relief, for the convenience, delight and ſatisfaction of every creature, any man, who is not careleſs or ſtupid, may be induced to cry out with the *Pſalmiſt: O Lord, how manifold are thy works, in wiſedom haſt thou made them all?* ſo may he with no leſs reaſon and ground after him pronounce and acknowledge; *The earth is full of the goodneſs of the Lord: The earth, O Lord, is full of thy mercy. Thy mercy is great unto the heavens; thy mercy is great above the heavens.* 'Tis indeed becauſe divine goodneſs is freely diffuſive and communicative of it ſelf; becauſe eſſential love is active, and fruitfull in beneficence; becauſe higheſt excellency is void of all envy, ſelfiſhneſs and tenacity, that the world was produced ſuch as it was; thoſe perfections being intrinſecal to God's nature, diſpoſed him to beſtow ſo much of being, of beauty, of pleaſure upon his creatures. *He openeth his hand, they are filled with good:* 'tis from God's open hand, his unconfined bounty and liberality, that all creatures do receive all that good which fills them, which ſatisfies their needs, and ſatiates their deſires. Every pleaſant object we view, every ſweet and ſavoury morſel we taſte, every fragrancy we ſmell, every harmony we hear; the wholſome, the cheering, the uſefull; yea, the innocent and inoffenſive qualities of every thing we do uſe and enjoy, are ſo many perſpicuous arguments of divine goodneſs; we may not onely by our reaſon collect it, but we even touch and feel it with all our ſenſes.

Pſal. 104. 24. 33. 5. 119. 64. 57. 10. 108. 4. Pſal. 33. 5. 119. 64. 57. 10. 108. 4. Pſal. 104. 10. &c. Pſal. 65. 11. 103. 4. Pſal. 104. 28.

The like concluſion may be inferr'd from the obſervation of divine providence. Every ſignification, or experiment, whence we may reaſonably infer that divine power and wiſedom do concur in upholding, managing, and directing the general ſtate of things, or the particular affairs of men, being well examined and weighed, would afford reaſon apt to perſuade, that the Governour of the World is gratiouſly affected toward his creatures and ſubjects. The general preſervation of things in their natural conſtitution and order; the diſpenſing conſtant viciſſitudes of ſeaſon, ſo as may ſerve for the ſupply of our needs; the maintaining ſuch a courſe of things in the World, that notwithſtanding the great irregularity of will, and violence of paſſion in ſo many perſons, yet men do ordinarily ſhift ſo as to live tolerably upon earth in peace and ſafety, and enjoyment of competent accommodations for life; with the aids and conſolations ariſing from mutual ſociety; the ſupports, encouragements and rewards of vertue many times in a ſtrange manner adminiſtred; the reſtraints, diſappointments, and ſeaſonable chaſtiſements of wickedneſs, eſpecially when it grows exorbitant and outrageous, unexpectedly intervening, with the like paſſages of providence, will, to him that ſhall *regard the works of the Lord and the operation of his hands*, ſufficiently declare as the other glorious attributes (wiſedom, power and juſtice) ſo eſpecially the goodneſs of

Pſal. 28. 5. Iſa. 5. 12.

of him, who preſides over the world; aſſuring that he is a friend to the welfare, and diſlikes the miſery of mankind. He that ſhall well obſerve, and conſider how among ſo many fierce and hard-hearted, ſo many crafty and ſpitefull, ſo many domineering and devouring ſpirits, the poor and weak, the ſimple and harmleſs ſort of people do however ſubſiſt, and enjoy ſomewhat, cannot but ſuſpect that an undiſcernible hand, full of pity and bounty, doth often convey the neceſſary ſupports of life to them, doth often divert imminent miſchiefs from them; cannot but acknowledge it credible, what the holy *Scripture* teacheth, that God is the friend, and patron, and protectour of thoſe needy and helpleſs people, *redeeming their ſoul from deceit, and violence* (as the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks) that he is (as the *Prophet* expreſſeth it) *a ſtrength to the poor, a ſtrength to the needy in his diſtreſs, a refuge from the ſtorm, a ſhadow from the heat, when the blaſt of the terrible ones is as a ſtorm againſt the wall.* He that ſhall remark, how frequently, in an unaccomptable way, ſuccour and relief do ſpring up to juſt and innocent perſons; ſo that in a whole age (as the *Pſalmiſt* obſerved) ſuch perſons do not appear deſtitute, or forſaken; how alſo iniquity is commonly ſtopp'd in his full carier, and then eaſily receives a check, when its violence ſeemed uncontrollable; how likewiſe many times the World is reſcued from confuſions and diſtractions unextricable by any viſible wit or force; with other like occurrences in humane affairs, muſt admit it for a reaſonable *hypotheſis* (fit to render a cauſe of ſuch appearances) that a tranſcendent Goodneſs doth ſecretly interpoſe, furthering the production of ſuch effects; he muſt upon ſuch obſervation be ready to verifie that of the *Pſalmiſt: Verily there is a reward for the righteous, verily there is a God that judgeth the earth.* St. *Paul* inſtructs us, that in paſt-times (that is, in all generations from the beginning of things) *God did atteſt himſelf* to be the Governour of the World: how? ἀγαθουργῶν, by his beneficence; *giving to men ſhowres from heaven, and fruitfull ſeaſons, filling their hearts with food and gladneſs:* competent evidences it ſeems theſe were of his providence, and withall (ſuppoſing that) certain demonſtrations of his goodneſs: although ſome have abuſed this kind of teſtimony, or argumentation ſo valid in it ſelf, unto a contrary purpoſe; alledging that if God ruled the World, ſo much wickedneſs and impiety would not be tolerated therein, that ingratefull and evil men could not ſo thrive and flouriſh; that more ſpeedy and more ſevere vengeance would be executed; that benefits would not be ſcattered among the crowd of men with ſo promiſcuous and undiſtinguiſhing a freeneſs: but ſuch diſcourſes, upon a juſt and true accompt, do onely infer the great patience and clemency, the unconfined mercy and bounty of our Lord; that he is in diſpoſition very different from pettiſh, and impatient man, who ſhould he have the reins put into his hands, and in his adminiſtration of things ſhould be ſo often neglected, croſſed, abuſed, would ſoon overturn all things; and being himſelf diſcompoſed with paſſion would precipitate the World into confuſion and ruine. Things would not have ſubſiſted hitherto, and continued in their orderly courſe, but by the moderation of an immenſe goodneſs; by that

Pſal. 14. 6. *tot.* Pſal. 10. 14. 72. 12. Iſa. 25. 4. Pſal. 37. 25. Pſal. 58. *ult.* Acts 14. 17.

-----magni cuſtos clementia mundi. Claud.

'Tis *by the Lord's mercies, that we* (we the whole body of ſinfull men, ſo guilty of heinous provocations, and rebellions againſt our Maker) *are not conſumed.* And what again God in the *Prophet* ſpeaks concerning *Iſrael*, he might have applied to the whole nation of men: *How ſhall I give thee up, Ephraim; how ſhall I deliver thee, Iſrael? how ſhall I make thee*

Lam. 3. 32. Acts 17. 26.

thee as Admah? how ſhall I ſet thee as Zeboim? I will not execute the fierceneſs of my anger, I will not return to deſtroy Ephraim; for I am God, and not man: the reaſon (for I am God, and not man) is obſervable; implying (upon parity of reaſon in the caſes, concerning that one Nation, and concerning the body of men) that it is an indulgence, and forbearance above, if not contrary to the temper of man, and even beyond humane conceit, whereby the ſtate of things here doth ſubſiſt, and is preſerved from ruine.

Thus nature, and thus providence do bear witneſs concerning the diſpoſition of God. As for holy *Scripture* there is nothing either in way of poſitive aſſertion more frequently inculcated, or by more illuſtrious examples ſet forth and made palpable, than this attribute of God. When God would impart a portraicture, or deſcription of himſelf to his deareſt friend, and favourite *Moſes*; the firſt and chief lineaments thereof are ſeveral ſorts, or ſeveral inſtances of goodneſs; he expreſſes himſelf *Mercifull and gratious, long-ſuffering and abundant in goodneſs:* (*Mercifull: El rachum*; a *God of pitying*, or ſtrong in pity; that is, moſt apt to commiſerate and to ſuccour thoſe who are in need or diſtreſs. *Gratious*, that is, ready both freely to forgive wrongs, and to diſpence favours. *Long-ſuffering*, or *longus irarum*, that is, not ſoon moved, or apt eaſily to conceive diſpleaſure; not haſty in execution of vengeance, or venting his anger in hurtfull effects. *Abundant in goodneſs*, that is, not ſparing as to quantity or quality, either in the multitude or magnitude of his favours, but in all reſpects exceedingly liberal; conferring willingly both very many, and very great benefits. Such did God repreſent himſelf to *Moſes*, when he deſired a fuller knowledge, and nearer acquaintance with him, than ordinary means afford. The ſame character in ſubſtance we have often repeated; and ſometimes with advantage of emphatical expreſſion, well deſerving our obſervation and regard; as when the Prophet *Joel* ſaith, that God *is penitent, or ſorry for evil inflicted*; and *Micah*, that *he delighteth in mercy*; and when *Nehemiah* calleth him *a God of pardons*; and when *Eſay* repreſents him as *waiting* (or ſeeking occaſions) *to be gratious*: and all this in the *Old Teſtament*, where God ſeems to look upon man with a leſs ſerene, and debonair aſpect: Indeed as that diſpenſation (ſutably to the nature and condition of things under it) doth ſet out God's mercy and goodneſs with eſpecial relation to this preſent World, or temporal Eſtate; ſo the *New* one more abundantly diſplays his more excellent care and love of our ſouls; his great tenderneſs of our ſpiritual and eternal welfare. It is all of it in its nature and deſign but as it were one entire declaration of the τὸ χρηστὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ (the beneficial diſpoſition, the benignity, or bountifulneſs of God, as St. *Paul* telleth us) 'tis a rare project of divine *philanthropy*; an illuſtrious *affidavit* of God's wonderfull propenſity to bleſs and ſave mankind; manifeſted by the higheſt expreſſions and inſtances of love and goodneſs that were poſſible. (For his not ſparing his own Son, *the expreſs image of his ſubſtance*, the deareſt object of his infinite love, the partaker of his eternal nature and glory, but delivering him up a ſacrifice for our offences; his moſt earneſt woing our baſeneſs and unworthineſs to reconciliation with him, and admiſſion or acceptance of his favour; his tendering upon ſo fair and eaſie terms an endleſs life in perfect joy and bliſs; his furniſhing us with ſo plentifull means and powerfull aids for attaining that happy ſtate; how pregnant demonſtrations are theſe, of unſpeakable goodneſs toward us, whence) The ordinary titles in this diſpenſation attributed unto him are, *the God of love and peace, of hope, of patience; of all grace,*

Exod. 34. 6.

אל רחום

Pſal. 86. 5. 103. 8, &c.

Joel 2. 13. Mich. 7. 18. Neh. 9. 17. Iſa. 30. 18.

Rom. 2. 4.

Rom. 5. 33. 13. 5. 2 Cor. 13. 11. 1. 3.

of

of all conſolation; the father of pities, rich in mercy, full of bowels; love and goodneſs it ſelf. Thus doth the *Scripture* poſitively aſſert God's goodneſs; thus it directly repreſents and deſcribes his gratious diſpoſition toward us. And as for examples (which muſt ſerve as to illuſtrate and explain, ſo alſo to verifie, and aſſure matters of this nature) if we carefully attend to God's ordinary proceedings with men there recorded, we ſhall find this diſpoſition very conſpicuous in them. Who can recompt the number, or ſet out the value of thoſe inſtances, wherein God's goodneſs is expreſſed toward ſuch as lov'd him? of his admirable condeſcenſion in drawing them to him; of the affectionate tenderneſs, with which he conſtantly embraced them; of his mercifull indulgence toward them, when provoked by their untowardly behaviour; of his kind acceptance, and munificent recompencing their endeavours to pleaſe him; of his deep compaſſionating their ſufferings; of his vigilant carefulneſs over them, and over all their concernments? Methinks the higheſt expreſſions, that language, aſſiſted with all its helps of metaphor and reſemblance, can afford, are very languid and faint in compariſon of what they ſtrain to repreſent, when the goodneſs of God toward them who love him, comes to be expreſſed: *As the heaven is high above the earth, ſo great is his mercy toward them that fear him. Like as a father pitieth his children, ſo the Lord pitieth them that fear him*; So *David* ſtrives to utter it, but with ſimilitudes far ſhort of the truth. If any will come near to reach it, 'tis that in *Moſes* and *Zechary*, when they are compared to *the apple of God's eye*, that is, to the moſt dear and tender part, as it were, about him.

Eph. 2. 4. Jam. 5. 11. 1 John 4. 8.

Luke 6. 35. *For he is kind unto the unthankfull, and to the evil.*

Pſal. 36. 6. Pſal. 103. 11, 13.

Deut. 32. 10. Zech. 2. 8. John 15. 14. 2 Chron. 20. 7.

We find them often ſtyled, and ever treated as friends, and as children; and that in a ſenſe tranſcending the vulgar ſignification of thoſe words; for, what friendſhip could endure, could paſs over, could forget, could admit an entire reconciliation, and re-eſtabliſhment in affection after ſuch heinous indignities, ſuch infidelities, ſuch undutifulneſs as were thoſe of *Adam*, of *Noah*, of *David*, of *Peter*? who would have received into favour and familiarity a *Manaſſes*, a *Magdalen*, a *Paul*? who would ſo far extend his regard upon the poſterity (upon ſuch a poſterity, ſo untoward, ſo unworthy) of his friend, as God did upon that of *Abraham*, in reſpect unto him? what great Prince would employ his principal Courtiers to guard, and ſerve a poor attendant, a mean ſubject of his? Yet; *The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them*; and many inſtances we have of thoſe glorious Inhabitants of Heaven by God's appointment ſtooping down to wait upon, and to perform ſervice to the ſons of men. But upon examples of this nature, being numberleſs, and compoſing indeed the main body of the *ſacred Hiſtory* (it being chiefly deſigned to repreſent them) I ſhall not inſiſt; I ſhall onely obſerve for preventing or ſatisfying objections (yea indeed for turning them to the advantage, and confirmation of that which we aſſert) that even in thoſe caſes, wherein God's higheſt ſeverity hath been exerciſed, when God hath purpoſed to exhibit moſt dreadfull inſtances of his juſtice upon the moſt provocative occaſions; we may diſcern his goodneſs eminently ſhewing it ſelf; That even in the greateſt extremity of his diſpleaſure, in his acts of higheſt vengeance, *Mercy* doth κατακαυχᾶσθαι τ κρίσεως (as St. *James* ſpeaketh) *boaſt it ſelf, and triumph over juſtice*; that God as the Sun (to uſe

Pſal. 34. 7.

Γίνεσθαι φιλανθρωπία ἡ τιμωρία· ὅπου δὲ ἐγὼ πείθομαι κολάζειν τ θεόν. Naz. *Orat.* 38.

Ἐγὼ τοσαύτην ἄδειαν ἔχω φημὶ τῆς τ θεοῦ κηδεμονίας, ὡς μὴ μόνον ἀφ' ὧν ἐπέμισεν, ἀλλὰ κ ἀφ' ὧν ἐκόλασεν ὁμοίως ἡμᾶς δύνασθαι τὴν ἀγαθότητα αὐτοῦ δεικνῦναι, κ τὴν φιλανθρωπίαν. Chryſ. *ἀνδρ.* ζ'.

Ὁ θεὸς ἀπαθὴς ὢν κἂν εὐεργετῇ, κἂν κολάζῃ, ὁμοίως ἔστιν ἀγαθός. Ibid.

Jam. 2. 13.

Tunc maximè eſt optimus, cùm tibi non bonus; ſicut Sol tibi etiam quando non putas, optimus & utilis, &c. Tertull. *in* Marc. II. 2.

Tertullian's ſimilitude) when he ſeems moſt to infeſt and ſcorch us; doth even then diſpenſe uſefull and healthfull influences upon us. Even I ſay in the moſt terrible and amazing examples of divine juſtice (ſuch as were the ejecting and excluding mankind from Paradiſe; the general deſtruction in the deluge; the excinding and extirpation of the *Amorites* together with other inhabitants of *Canaan*; the delivering *Iſrael* and *Judah* into the *Aſſyrian* thraldom, the final deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, together with the diſperſion of the *Jewiſh* Nation over the World, and its ſad conſequences) we may (not hardly) obſerve particulars, more than ſavouring of great mercy and goodneſs:

Vide Chryſ. *Tom.* 6. *Or.* 8. *p.* 63. *optimé.*

1. That (in moſt of theſe caſes, in all according to ſome accompt) God was not moved to the diſpleaſure productive of thoſe effects but upon very great conſiderations. That he did not ſeek advantages, nor embrace all occaſions; but was incenſed by ſuperlative degrees of iniquity and impurity (ſuch in their own nature, and much aggravated by their circumſtances) ſuch as rendred common life inconvenient and inſupportable to men; made the earth to ſtink with their filth and corruption; to groan under the burthen and weight of them; to pant and labour for a riddance from them.

2. That God did not upon the firſt glimpſes of provocation proceed to the execution and diſcharge of his wrath, but did with wonderfull patience expect a change in the offenders, *waiting to be gratious*, as the Prophet ſpeaketh; affording more than competent time, and means more than ſufficient of appeaſing him by repentance; vouchſafing frequent admonitions, ſolicitations, threatnings, moderate corrections, and other ſuch proper methods conducing to their amendment, and to their preſervation.

Eſa. 30. 18.

3. That their inflictions themſelves, how grievous ſoever in appearance, were not really extreme in meaſure; not accompanied with ſo acute torments, nor with ſo lingring pains, nor with ſo utter a ruine as might have been inflicted; but that (as *Ezra*, in reſpect to one of thoſe caſes, confeſſeth) they *were leſs, than their iniquities deſerved.* That (as it is in the *Pſalm*) *He did not ſtir up all his wrath*; which would have immediately conſumed them, or infinitely tormented them.

Ezr. 9. 13.

Pſal. 78 38.

4. That (conſequently upon ſome of thoſe premiſſes) the afflictions brought upon them were in a ſort rather neceſſary than voluntary in reſpect of him; rather a natural fruit of their diſpoſitions and dealings than a free reſult of his will; however contrary to his primary intentions and deſires. Whence he no leſs truly, than earneſtly diſclaims having any pleaſure in their death, that he *afflicted willingly, or grieved the children of men*; and charged their diſaſters upon themſelves, as the ſole cauſes of them.

Ezek. 18. 23, 32. 33. 11. Lam. 3. 33. Hoſ. 13. 9.

5. That farther, the chaſtiſements inflicted were wholeſome and profitable, both in their own nature, and according to his deſign; both in reſpect to the generality of men (who by them were warned, and by ſuch examples deterr'd from incurring the like miſchiefs; were kept from the inconveniences, ſecured from the temptations, the violences, the allurements, the contagions of the preſent evil ſtate; according to that reaſon alledged for puniſhments of this kind: *All the people ſhall hear, and fear, and doe no more preſumptuouſly*) and in regard to the ſufferers themſelves, who thereby were prevented from proceeding farther in their wicked courſes; accumulating

Chryſ. Ἀνδρ. ζ'. Ὁμοῦ καὶ δικαίας καὶ ἀλεεὶς καὶ διδασκαλός ἐστιν ὁ Θεός. *Ibid.* Deut. 17. 13. Ἐπὶ δηοσι τιμωρίαν, ὐ σφῶν ἀπολοῦντων ἀπαυστὶ δίκλω, ἀλλὰ τὰ μέλλοντα διορθούμενος. Chryſ. *Tom.* 8. *p.* 99.

lating (or, *treaſuring up*, as the *Apoſtle* ſpeaketh) farther degrees of *wrath*, as obdurate and incorrigible people will ſurely doe. (*Why*, ſaith the *Prophet*, *ſhould ye be ſtricken any more?* (to what purpoſe is moderate correction?) *ye will revolt more and more.*) That he did with a kind of violence to his own inclinations, and reluctancy inflict puniſhments on them. *O Ephraim, how ſhall I give thee up, O Ephraim.* Yea farther. Rom. 2. 5. Iſa. 1. 5. 26. 10. Hoſ. 6. 4.

6. That during their ſufferances God did bear compaſſion toward them, who underwent it. *His bowels*, as we are told, *ſounded and were troubled*; his *heart was turned within him*; his *repentings were kindled together*; *in all their afflictions himſelf was afflicted*; *he remember'd, and conſider'd they were but duſt*; that they *were but fleſh* (that they were but of a weak, and frail temper; that they were naturally prone to corruption, and evil) and did therefore pity their infirmity, and their miſery. Iſa. 63. 9, 15. Hoſ. 11. 8. Jer. 31. 20. Gen. 6. 3. 8. 21. Pſal. 103. 14. 78. 39.

7. That God *in his wrath remembred mercy* (as the Prophet *Habacuc* ſpeaks) mixing gratious intentions of future refreſhment and reparation with the preſent executions of juſtice. *I know* (ſaith He in the Prophet *Jeremy*) *the thoughts that I think toward you; thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Behold, I will bring health and cure, I will cure them, and will reveal unto them abundance of peace and truth.* And, *For a ſmall moment* (ſaith he again in *Eſay*) *have I forſaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee.* And, *Ye ſhall be comforted concerning the evil that I have brought upon Jeruſalem.* ----and *ye ſhall know, that I have not done without cauſe all that I have done in it*; ſaith the Lord (he ſaith ſo in *Ezekiel*) *without cauſe*, that is, without a beneficial deſign toward them. Hab. 3. 2. Gen. 6. 3. 8. 21. Jer. 29. 11. 33. 6. Iſa. 54. 7. Ezek. 14. 21.

8. Laſtly, That he always ſignified a readineſs to turn from his anger and to forgive them; and upon very equal and eaſie terms to be fully reconciled to them: according to that in the *Pſalmiſt*, *He doth not always chide, neither will he keep his anger for ever*; but upon any reaſonable overtures of humiliation, confeſſion and converſion to him was ready to abate, yea, to remove the effects of his diſpleaſure; *Thou waſt a God that forgaveſt them, though thou tookeſt vengeance of their inventions.* Pſal. 103. 9. Pſal. 99. 8.

Theſe particulars, if we attentively ſurvey thoſe dreadfull examples of divine ſeverity forementioned (the greateſt which hiſtory acquaints us with, or which have been ſhewed on this theatre of humane affairs) we may obſerve, moſt of them in all, all of them in ſome, either plainly expreſſed, or ſufficiently inſinuated by the circumſtances obſervable in the hiſtorical narrations concerning them; ſo that even the harſheſt inſtances of God's wrathfull dealing with ſome men, may well ſerve to the illuſtration of his mercy and goodneſs toward all men; may evince it true, what our Lord affirms, that God is, χρηστὸς ὅτι ἀχαρίστους, καὶ πονηροὺς, *kind and beneficent even to the moſt ingrateſull and unworthy perſons.* To make which obſervation good, and conſequently to aſſert the verity of our Text (That *God is good unto all, and mercifull over all his works*) againſt the moſt plauſible exceptions; I ſhall examine the particulars in the following Diſcourſe. Luke 6. 35.

Sermon XXXVII.

Of the Goodneſs of GOD.

PSAL. CXLV. 9.

The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works.

I Shall now more particularly conſider the ſeveral Inſtances beforementioned.

I. The puniſhment inflicted on mankind for the firſt tranſgreſſion containeth in it much of depth and myſtery, ſurpaſſing perhaps all capacity of man to reach; its full comprehenſion being by divine wiſedom (I conceive) purpoſely concealed from us; ſo that I cannot pretend thoroughly to explain it; and ſhall not therefore ſpeak much about it.

This indeed is clear, that God did in his proceedings occaſioned thereby intend remarkably to evidence his grievous reſentment and indignation againſt wilfull diſobedience; yet in the management thereof we may obſerve; that,

Vid. Chryſ. Ἀνδρ. ζ'. Οὐ γὰρ εἶπε, καθάπερ εἰκὸς ἦν ὑβρισμένον, εἰπεῖν. ὦ μιαρὲ, καὶ παμμίαρε, &c. Ibid.

1. After that provocation (in it ſelf ſo high, and liable to ſo great aggravations) God did expreſs his reſentment in ſo calm and gentle a manner, that *Adam* though abaſhed upon the conſcience of his fault, was not yet by the vehemency of the reproof utterly diſmayed or dejected.

2. God uſed great moderation in the infliction of this puniſhment; mitigating the extremity of the ſentence juſtly decreed and plainly declared to *Adam* (that in caſe of his offending againſt the law preſcribed him, he ſhould immediately die) for notwithſtanding his forfeiture that very day of life, God reprieved him, and allowed him a long life, almoſt of a thouſand years, after.

Gen. 2. 17.

3. God did did not quite reject man thereupon, nor did withdraw his fatherly care and providence from him, but openly continued them; inſomuch that immediately after the curſe pronounced upon our firſt parents, the next paſſage we meet with is, that unto *Adam* and his *wife* did the Lord God make coats, and cloathed them.

Gen. 3. 21.

4. Although indeed man was by his fault a great loſer, and became deprived of high advantages; yet the mercy of God did leave him in no very deplorable eſtate, ſimply conſidered, as to his life here; the reliques of his firſt eſtate, and the benefits continued to him being very conſiderable; ſo that we the inheritours of that great diſaſter do commonly find the enjoyment

joyment of life, with the conveniences attending it, to be ſweet and deſirable.

5. The event manifeſts, that while God in appearance ſo ſeverely puniſhed mankind, he did in his mind reſerve thoughts of higheſt kindneſs toward us; even then deſigning not only to reſtore us to our former degree, but to raiſe us to a capacity of obtaining a far more high pitch of happineſs. While he excluded us from a terreſtrial paradiſe here, he provided a far better celeſtial one, into which, if we pleaſe, by obedience to his holy laws we may certainly enter. So that in this of all moſt heavy inſtance of vengeance God's exceeding goodneſs and clemency do, upon ſeveral conſiderations moſt clearly ſhine.

II. The calamity, which by the general deluge did overflow the World, was not (we may conſider) brought upon men but in regard to the moſt enormous offences long continued in, and after amendment was become deſperate. Not till after much forbearance, and till men were grown to a ſuperlative pitch of wickedneſs by no fit means (by no friendly warning, no ſharp reprehenſion, no moderate chaſtiſement) corrigible. Not untill the earth was become (eſpecially for perſons of any innocence or integrity) no tolerable habitation, but a theatre of lamentable tragedies, a ſeat of horrid iniquity, a ſink of loathſome impurity. So that in reaſon it was to be eſteemed rather a favour to mankind to reſcue it from ſo unhappy a ſtate, than to ſuffer it to perſiſt therein. To ſnatch men away out of ſo uncomfortable a place, from ſo wretched a condition, was a mercy; it had been a judgment to have left them annoying, rifling and harraſing; biting, tearing and devouring; yea defiling and debauching each other; and ſo heaping upon themſelves loads of guilt, and deeper obligations to vengeance. *The earth* (ſaith the Text) *was corrupt before God; and the earth was fill'd with violence. God looked upon the earth, and behold it was corrupt; for all fleſh had corrupted its way upon the earth*; which univerſal and extreme corruption had not in probability ſprung up in a ſmall time (for, Gen. 6. 11.

Nemo repente fuit turpiſſimus,

is true not only of ſingle men, but of communities; no people, no age doth ſuddenly degenerate into extreme degrees of wickedneſs) ſo that the divine patience had long endured and attended upon men, before the reſolution of thus puniſhing them was taken up; the which alſo was not at firſt peremptory and irreverſible, but in God's deſign and deſire it was revocable; for the World had a long reprieve after the ſentence paſs'd; execution was deferr'd till *Noah*'s long preaching of righteouſneſs, and denouncing of judgment in a manner ſo notorious, and ſignal (not by verbal declarations only, but by the viſible ſtructure of the Ark) could prevail nothing toward their amendment, but was either diſtruſted, or diſregarded, and perhaps derided by them. For, as St. *Peter* tells us, *They were diſobedient, when once the long-ſuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing*; that is, (as is collected by ſeveral Interpreters from the * Text of the ſtory) during no leſs than 120 years; a competent time for their recollecting themſelves, and endeavouring by amendment of life to prevent the ruine threatned to come upon them. Yet notwithſtanding that, this obſtinate and incorrigible diſobedience did ſo much diſpleaſe God, as that in conſideration thereof God is ſaid to have *repented that he made man on the earth*, and to have been thereby grieved at the heart; Yet did he ſo temper his anger as not utterly to deſtroy mankind, but provided 1 Pet. 3. 20. 2 Pet. 2. 5. * Gen. 6. 3. Gen. 6. 6.

provided againſt its total ruine by preſerving one Family as a Seminary thereof; preſerving the father thereof (queſtionleſs by a ſpecial grace) from the ſpreading contagion, inſpiring him with faith, and qualifying him for the favour, which by him he deſigned to communicate unto the World; the reparation thereof, and reſtoring the generations of men. So that alſo through this paſſage of providence, how diſmal and dreadfull ſoever at firſt ſight, much goodneſs will be tranſparent to him that looks upon it attentively.

III. In the next place, as to that extermination and exciſion of the *Canaanites*, which carries ſo horrible an appearance of ſeverity, we may find it qualifiable, if we conſider, that for the nature of the treſpaſſes, which procured it, they were inſufferably heinous and abominable: Moſt ſottiſh, barbarous, and baſe ſuperſtitions (cruelty and impurity being eſſential ingredients into their performances of religion, and it being piety with them to be exceedingly wicked) and in their other practice moſt beaſtly laſciviouſneſſes, moſt bloudy violences, oppreſſions and rapines generally abounding. So that for thoſe men themſelves, who were by turns, as it happen'd, the authours and the objects of theſe dealings, it could not be deſireable to continue in a ſtate of living ſo wretched and uncomfortable. Impunity had been no mercy to ſuch people, but rather a cruelty; cutting them off muſt needs be the greateſt favour they were capable of; it being only removing them from a hell here, and preventing their deſerving many worſe hells thereafter. Even to themſelves it was a favour, and a greater one to their poſterity, whom they might have brought forth to ſucceed into their courſes, and to the conſequences of them; whom they would have engaged into their wicked cuſtoms, and their wofull miſchiefs. They were not ſo deſtroyed from the Land untill it grew uninhabitable in any tolerable manner, and it ſelf could not, as it were, endure them any longer, but (as the Text doth moſt ſignificantly expreſs it) *did ſpue them out*; being like a ſtomach ſurcharg'd with foul, or poiſonous matter, which it loaths, and is pained with, and therefore naturally labours to expell. Neither was this ſad doom executed upon them till after 400 years of forbearance; for even in *Abraham*'s time God took notice of their iniquity, then born and growing; and gave accompt of his ſuſpending their puniſhment; *becauſe* (ſaid he) *the iniquity of the Amorites* was not yet full (that is, was not yet arrived to a pitch of deſperate obſtinacy and incorrigibility) While there was the leaſt glimpſe of hope, the leaſt reliques of any reaſon, any regret, any ſhame in them, the leaſt poſſibility of recovery, God ſtopped his avenging hand; but when all ground of hope was removed; the whole ſtock of natural light and ſtrength was imbezill'd; all fear, all remorſe, all modeſty were quite baniſhed away; all means of cure had proved ineffectual; the gangreen of vice had ſeized on every part, iniquity was grown mature and mellow; then was the ſtroak of juſtice indeed not more ſeaſonable than neceſſary; then was the fatal ſword the only proper remedy; then ſo with one ſtroak to cut off them, and their ſins, and their miſchiefs, and their miſeries together, was an argument no leſs ſtrong and clear of God's mercifull goodneſs, than of his juſt anger toward them.

Levit. 18.

Levit. 18. 28.

Gen. 15. 16.

IV. The like accompt we may render of God's judgments upon the people of *Iſrael*. If we conſult the *Prophets*, who declare the ſtate of things, the facts, the diſpoſitions, the guilts, that brought them down from Heaven,

ven, we ſhall ſee, that they came upon accompt of an Univerſal Apoſtaſie from both the faith and practice of true religion; *a deep corruption (like that in the days of Gibeah*, as the Prophet *Hoſea* ſpeaketh) in mind and manners; an utter perverting of all truth and right; an obſtinate compliance with, or emulation of the moſt abominable practices of the heathen Nations about them; an Univerſal Apoſtaſie, I ſay, from God and all goodneſs; a thorough prevalence of all iniquity. Hear the *Prophets* expreſſing it, and deſcribing them. *Jeremy*; *Run ye to and fro through the ſtreets of Hieruſalem; ſee now, and know, and ſeek in the broad places thereof; if ye can find a man; if there be any, that executeth judgment, that ſeeketh the truth, and I will pardon it. Eſay*; *The earth is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; becauſe they have tranſgreſſed the laws, changed the ordinances, broken the everlaſting covenant: Ah ſinfull nation, a people laden with iniquities, a ſeed of evil doers, children that are corrupters; they have forſaken the Lord, they have provoked the holy one of Iſrael unto anger; they are gone away backward*, &c. Thus do theſe and other Prophets in a like ſtrain deſcribe in the groſs the ſtate of things preceding thoſe judgments. And in *Ezekiel* (in divers places, particularly in the 8*th*, but eſpecially in the 22*d* Chapter) we have their offences in retail, and by parts (their groſs impieties, their grievous cruelties, extortions and oppreſſions) ſet out copiouſly, and in moſt lively colours. And as the quality of their provocations was ſo bad, and the extenſion of them ſo large, ſo was their condition deſperate; there were no means of remedy left, no hopes of amendment; ſo was their forehead covered with impudence, their heart hardned with obſtinacy, their minds deeply tinctured with habitual pravity and perverſneſs: *Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the Leopard his ſpots, then may ye alſo doe good that are accuſtomed to doe evil*, ſaith *Jeremy* concerning them. All methods of reclaiming them had proved fruitleſs; no favourable dealings, no gentle admonition or kind inſtruction would avail any thing; for 'tis of them the Prophet *Eſay* ſaith; *Let favour be ſhewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteouſneſs.* No advices, no reproofs (how frequent, how vehement, how urgent ſoever) had any effect upon them. Almighty God declares often that he had ſpoken unto them riſing up early, but they would not hear, nor regard his ſpeech; did not only neglect, and refuſe, but *deſpiſe*, *loath*, *mock*, and *reproach* it (*turning their back upon him*, *pulling away their ſhoulder*, *ſtiffning their neck*, *and ſtopping their ears*, *that they ſhould not hear*) *that he had ſpread out his hands all the day long to a rebellious and gainſaying people; to a people that* (with extreme inſolence and immodeſty) *provoked him to anger continually to his face.* Nor could any tenders of mercy allure or move them: *I ſaid* (God ſaid it in *Jeremy*) *after all theſe things, turn unto me, but ſhe returned not. Amend your ways, and your doings, and obey the voice of the Lord your God, and the Lord will repent him of the evil, that he hath pronounced againſt you. Repent, and turn your ſelves from all your tranſgreſſions, ſo iniquity ſhall not be your ruine*; and innumerable the like overtures we have of grace, and mercy to them; all which they proudly and perverſely rejected, perſiſting in their wicked courſes: they even repelled and ſilenced, they rudely treated and perſecuted the Prophets ſent unto them with meſſages of kind warning, and overtures of grace; ſo obſtructing all acceſs of mercy to themſelves: *They ſay to the Seers, ſee not; and to the Prophets, propheſie not unto us right things*; ſo *Eſay* reports their proceeding; *which of the Prophets did not your fathers perſecute?* ſo St. *Stephen* expoſtulates with them. Neither were gentler chaſtiſements deſigned for their

Hoſ. 9. 9.
Jer. 5. 1.
Eſ. 24. 5. 1. 4.
Ezek. 22.
Jer. 13. 23.
Iſa. 26. 10.
Jer. 25. 4. 32. 33. 6. 10. Zech. 7. 11. Neh. 9. 29, 30. Eſ. 65. 2. 2 Cron. 36. 16.
Jer. 3. 7. 7. 3. 4. 1, 14. 18. 11. 26. 13.
Jer. 11. 21. 32. 30. Eſa. 30. 10. Matt. 23. 37. Ezek. 18. Eſa. 30. 10. Acts 7. 51.

their correction and cure any-wiſe available; they made no impreſſion on them, they produced no change in them: *In vain* (ſaith God) *I have ſmitten your children, they have received no correction.* And, *Thou haſt ſmitten them, but they have not grieved; thou haſt conſumed them, but they have refuſed to receive correction; they have made their faces harder than a rock, they have refuſed to return*; and, *The people turneth not to him that ſmiteth them, neither do they ſeek the Lord of hoſts.* Unto this καταρτισμὸς εἰς ἀπώλειαν, this perfect fitneſs (as St. *Paul* ſpeaketh) this maturity of deſperate, and irrecoverable impiety, had that people grown; not at once, and on a ſudden, but by continual ſteps of provocation, through a long courſe of time, during that divine patience ſparing them, and by various expedients ſtriving to recover them. This conſideration is frequently inſiſted upon, eſpecially in the Prophet *Jeremy*, *The children of Iſrael, and the children of Judah have only done evil before me from their youth; ſince the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day, I have even ſent unto you all my ſervants the Prophets, daily riſing up early, and ſending them; Yet they hearkned not unto me*, &c. Well then, after ſo many hundred years of abuſed patience, and unſucceſsfull labour to reclaim them, it was needfull that juſtice ſhould have her courſe upon them: Yet how then did God inflict it, with what mildneſs and moderation, with what pity and relenting? *Nevertheleſs* (ſay they in *Nehemiah*) *for thy great mercies ſake thou didſt not utterly conſume them, nor forſake them, for thou art a gratious, and mercifull God.* And, *Thou haſt puniſhed us leſs than our iniquities deſerve*, doth *Ezra* confeſs. *I will not execute the fierceneſs of my anger*; doth God himſelf reſolve and declare in *Hoſea*. So mild he was as to the meaſure of his puniſhing; and what compaſſion accompanied it, thoſe pathetical expreſſions declare; *My heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. Is Ephraim my dear ſon, is he a pleaſant child? for ſince I ſpake againſt him, I do earneſtly remember him ſtill, therefore my bowels are troubled for him. In all their afflictions he was afflicted*, &c. We may add, that notwithſtanding all theſe provocations of his wrath, and abuſings of his patience, which thus neceſſitated God to execute his vengeance, yet even during the execution thereof, and while his hand was ſo ſtretched forth againſt them, he did retain thoughts of favour and intentions of doing good even toward this ſo ingratefull, ſo inſenſible, ſo incorrigible a people: *For a ſmall moment* (ſaith God) *have I forſaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee: I know the thoughts that I think toward you, ſaith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.* Now theſe things being ſeriouſly laid together, have we not occaſion and ground ſufficient even in this inſtance no leſs to admire and adore the wonderfull benignity, mercy, and patience of God, than to dread and tremble at his juſtice?

Iſa. 1. 16, 17. &c. (Neh. 9. 29.) Jer. 2. 30. 5 3. Iſa. 9. 13. Rom. 9. 22. Jer. 32. 30. 7. 25. 16. 12. 11. 7. Ezr. 9. 7. Neh. 9. 31. Ezr. 9. 13. Hoſ. 11. 19. Jer. 31. 20. Iſa. 63. 9. Iſa. 54. 7. Jer. 29. 11. 33. 6, 7.

V. As for the laſt ſo calamitous and piteous deſtruction of *Hieruſalem*, with the grievous conſequences thereof, as we might apply thereto the former conſiderations, ſo we ſhall only obſerve what was peculiar in that caſe; that God diſpenſed ſuch means to prevent it; (to remove the meritorious cauſes thereof, obſtinate impenitency and incredulity; reſiſting the truth by him ſent from Heaven with ſo clear a revelation and powerfull confirmation; deſpiſing the Spirit of God, and the dictates of their own conſcience; baſely miſuſing divers ways, and at laſt cruelly murthering the Son of God) ſuch means, I ſay, God did employ for the removing thoſe provocatives of vengeance, which (as our Lord himſelf ſaith)

ſaith) were ſufficient to have converted *Tyre* and *Sidon*; yea, to have preſerved *Sodom* it ſelf; ſo that our *Saviour* could with a compaſſionate grief deplore the unſucceſsfulneſs of his tender affection, and ſolicitous care for their welfare, in theſe paſſionate terms; *How often would I have gathered thy children as a hen gathers her chickens under her wing, but ye would not?* That St. *John* the *Baptiſt* his ſharp reproofs, his powerfull exhortations, his downright and clear forewarnings of what would follow (*Even now*, ſaid he, *the axe is laid to the root of the tree*) attended with ſo remarkable circumſtances of his perſon, and his carriage (which induced all the World about him to regard him as no ordinary man, but a ſpecial inſtrument of God, and meſſenger from Heaven) did yet find no effect conſiderable; the *Phariſees* and *Lawyers*, thoſe corrupt guides, whoſe authority managed the blind multitude, *defeating the counſel of God toward themſelves*, as St. *Luke* ſpeaketh; (that is, defeating his gracious purpoſe of reclaiming them from diſobedience, and conſequently of withholding the judgments imminent) they reviled the perſon of that venerable *Prophet*, *He hath a devil*, ſaid they; they ſlighted his premonitions, and rejected his advices, by obſerving which thoſe dreadfull miſchiefs, which fell upon their rebellious heads, might have been averted. We may add, that even thoſe fearfull judgments were tempered with mixtures of favourable deſign, not onely to the community of mankind (which by ſo remarkable a vengeance upon the perſecutours of our *Lord* and the ſcorners of his doctrine was converted unto, or confirmed in the Chriſtian Faith) but even toward that people, whom it ſerved to convince of their errours and crimes; to induce them to repentance, to provoke them unto the acknowledgment and embracing of God's truth, ſo palpably vindicated by him. So that I might here apply that paſſage of St. *Paul* (if not directly and adequately according to his ſenſe, yet with no incongruous alluſion at leaſt) *Have they ſtumbled, that they ſhould fall* (or, was there no other deſign of God's judgments upon them, but their utter ruine?) μὴ γένοιτο· *No ſuch matter; but through their fall ſalvation came to the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealouſie* (or emulation.) And, in effect, as our *Lord* in the midſt of his ſufferings did affectionately pray for God's mercy upon them, as the *Apoſtles* did offer reconciliation unto them all indifferently, who would repent, and were willing to embrace it; ſo were ſuch of them as were diſpoſed to comply with thoſe invitations, received to grace, how deeply ſoever involved in the continued guilt of thoſe enormous perſecutions, injuries and blaſphemies; as particularly Saint *Paul*, that illuſtrious example of God's patience, and mercy in this caſe. So that neither by this inſtance is any attribute of God more ſignalized, than his tranſcendent goodneſs, in like manner as by the former inſtances, and in analogy to them by all others, that may be aſſigned. By all of them it will appear that God is primarily and of himſelf diſpoſed to doe all fitting and poſſible good to men, not to inflict evil more than is fit and neceſſary; that God is indeed *Optimus ex naturæ proprietate* (*moſt good according to property of nature*) although *juſtus ex cauſæ neceſſitate* (*ſevere from the neceſſity of the caſe*) as *Tertullian* ſpeaketh. To afflict men (either ſome men ſingly, or whole ſocieties of men) may be ſometimes expedient upon ſeveral accompts; for vindicating the eſteem, and ſupporting the intereſt of goodneſs, which may by impunity be diſgraced, endamaged, endangered; for the diſcrimination of good and evil men, in an obſervable manner; for the encouragement and comfort of the good; the reduction and amendment of the bad; for preventing the contagion,

Matt. 11. 21.
23. 37.
3. 10.
Luke 7. 30.
Matt. 11. 18.
Rom. 11. 11.
1 Tim. 1. 16.
De reſurr. Carnis, c. 14.

and ſtopping the progreſs of iniquity, whereupon greater guilts, and worſe miſchiefs would enſue; It may be as neceſſary as ſharp Phyſick to cure publick or private diſtempers; as an inſtrument of rowſing us out of our ſinfull lethargies; as that which may cauſe us better to underſtand our ſelves, and more to remember God; as a ground of fearing God, and an inducement to believe his providence. For thoſe and many ſuch purpoſes to bring upon men things diſtaſtfull to ſenſe, may be very requiſite; nor doth the doing it any wiſe prejudice the truth of divine goodneſs, but rather confirms it, commends it, and advances its juſt eſteem. It would be a fond indulgence, not a wiſe kindneſs; a cruel, rather than a loving pity to deal otherwiſe. In fine, we are to conſider, that all the miſchiefs we undergo, God doth not ſo much bring them on us, as we do pull them on our ſelves. They are αὐθαίρετα πήματα, *affected*, or *ſelf-choſen miſchiefs*; they are κακὰ βλαστήματα προαιρέσεως, *bad ſprouts of our free choice* (as a *Father* calls them) they are (as another *Father* ſaith) ἑκούσιον κακοῦ ἀκούσια ἔκγονα (*the unwilling off-ſprings of wilfull evils*) they are the certain reſults of our own will, or the natural fruits of our actions; actions, which (however God deſire, adviſe, command; perſuade, entreat, excite) we do will, we are reſolved to perform. *We in a manner* (as *Salvian* ſaith) *do force God to doe whatever he doeth in this kind; violently plucking down vengeance on our own heads; compelling the kind and mercifull Lord, againſt his nature and will, to afflict us; not ſo much as giving him leave to ſpare us.* God vehemently diſclaims himſelf to be the original cauſe; to deſign (according to abſolute or primary intention) to deſire to delight in our grief, or our ruine. *As I live, ſaith the Lord,* (and ſurely when God ſwears, we may believe that he is very ſerious) *I have no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. I call heaven to record this day againſt you, that I have ſet life and death before you; therefore chuſe life. He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men. He would have all men to be ſaved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth. He would not have any periſh, but that all ſhould come to repentance. He made not death, nor hath he pleaſure in the deſtruction of the living.* God then, if we may believe him, is not the firſt authour of our calamities: who then? He tells us himſelf: *O Iſrael, thou haſt deſtroyed thy ſelf: thou haſt fallen by thy own iniquity. Your ſins have withholden good things from you. Our iniquities like the wind have taken us away. How often would I have gathered you, but ye would not?* The deſigns, and the endeavours of God do tend to our welfare and ſalvation; 'tis our will and our actions which onely procure our ruine: *'Tis we,* that (as the *Wiſe-man* ſaith) *ſeek death in the errour of our life; and pull upon our own ſelves deſtruction.* So that, to conclude this part of our diſcourſe, Even thoſe paſſages of providence, which at firſt glimpſe appear moſt oppoſite, or diſadvantageous to the goodneſs of God (or to our opinion and belief concerning it) do, being well ſifted, no wiſe prejudice it, but rather ſerve to corroborate and magnifie it.

Baſil. *Orat. Quòd Deus non eſt cauſa mali, elegantèr & pulchrè de hac re.*

Wiſd. 1. 12.

Carm. Pythag. Cyril. Hier. Damaſc.

Πάντα κονεῖ ἡ φαγμαλεύσασα ὁ θεὸς, ὥστε ἡμᾶς ἀπαλλάξαι κολάσεως, ἢ πωμείας. Chryſ. *Tom.* 8. *p.* 100.

Nos vim Deo facimus iniquitatibus noſtris; nos nolentem ulciſci cogimus. Deus enim pius & miſericors eſt, & qui neminem velit perire, vel lædere, &c. Salv. *lib.* 5. & 8.

Miſeros nos ſi nec juranti Deo credimus. Hier.

Ezek. 18. 30. 33. 11.

Deut. 30. 19.

Lam. 3. 32.

Wiſd. 1. 13.

Hoſ. 13. 9. 14. 1.

Jer. 5. 25.

Iſa. 64. 6.

Matt. 23. 37.

Sap. 1. 5.

St. *Chryſoſtome* in divers places doth inſiſt upon the goodneſs of God in making and threatning Hell it ſelf.

Τῆς Βασιλείας ἐκ ἔλαττον, ἢ ὁ γέεννης ἀπειλὴ δείκνυσιν, αὐτῆς τὴν ἀγαθότητα, &c. Ἀνδρ. ζ'.

I ſhall onely farther briefly touch (or rather but mention) the uſes and effects, to the producing which, the conſideration of God's goodneſs, in ſo manifold ways declared, ſhould be applied.

1. It

1. It ſhould beget in us hearty love and reverence toward God, in regard to this attribute ſo excellent and amiable in it ſelf, ſo beneficial and advantageous to us. What can we eſteem, what can we love, if ſo admirable goodneſs doth not affect us? how prodigiouſly cold and hard is that heart, which cannot be warm'd and ſoftned into affection by ſo melting a conſideration?

2. It ſhould produce as gratefull ſenſe in our hearts, ſo real endeavours of thankfull obedience in our lives. It ſhould make us *walk worthy of God,* Col. 1. 20. *to all well-pleaſing, bringing forth fruit in every good work*; taking heed of doing, as did *Hezekiah*, of whom it is ſaid; that *he rendred not according* 2 Chro. 32. 35. *to the benefit done unto him, for his heart was lifted up; therefore was wrath upon him*; that we may not have that expoſtulation juſtly applied unto us: Deut. 2. 3. *Doe ye thus requite the Lord; O fooliſh people, and unwiſe?*

3. It ſhould engage us the more to fear God; complying with the *Prophet*'s admonition; *Fear the Lord and his goodneſs.* Conſidering that intimation of the *Pſalmiſt*; *There is forgiveneſs with thee, that thou mayſt* Pſal. 130. 4. *be feared*; obſerving that advice of *Samuel, Onely fear the Lord, and ſerve* 1 Sam. 12. 24. *him, for conſider what great things he hath done for you.* For that indeed nothing is more terrible, than goodneſs ſlighted, and patience abuſed. Hoſ. 3. 5.

4. It ſhould humble, aſhame and grieve us, for having croſſed and offended ſuch exceeding goodneſs and mercy. It ſhould cauſe us greatly to deteſt our ſins, which lie under ſo heinous an aggravation, to be deeply diſpleaſed with our ſelves, who have ſo unworthily committed them.

5. It ſhould therefore render us wary and vigilant againſt the commiſſion of any ſin; that is, of incurring the guilt of ſo enormous ingratitude and baſeneſs; making us cautious of doing like thoſe, of whom 'tis confeſſed in *Nehemiah*; *They did eat, and were filled and delighted them-* Neh. 9. 25, 26. *ſelves in thy great goodneſs; nevertheleſs they were diſobedient, and rebelled againſt thee, and caſt thy laws behind their back.*

6. It ſhould alſo breed and nouriſh in us faith, and hope in God. For what reaſon can we have to diſtruſt of ſo great goodneſs; that he will refuſe to help us in our need; that he will fail in accompliſhment of his promiſes; that he will withhold what is convenient for us? It ſhould preſerve us from deſpair. What temptation can we have to deſpair of mercy, if we heartily repent of our miſdoings, and ſincerely endeavour to pleaſe him? *Vid.* Chryſ. *ad* Theod. 2. *Tom.* 6. *p.* 63. *optimè & fuſè.*

7. It ſhould upon the ſame account excite us to a free and conſtant exerciſe of all devotions. For why ſhould we be ſhy or fearfull of entring into ſo friendly and favourable a preſence; why ſhould we be backward from having (upon any occaſion or need) a recourſe to him, who is ſo willing, ſo deſirous, ſo ready to doe us good? what ſhould hinder us from delighting in oblations of bleſſing, and praiſe unto him? Matt. 7. 11.

8. It ought to render us ſubmiſſive, patient and contented under God's hand, of correction, or trial: as knowing, that it cannot be without very juſt cauſe, that ſuch goodneſs ſeemeth diſpleaſed with us; that we are the chief cauſes of our ſuffering, or our want; ſo that we can have no good cauſe to repine, or complain: for, *Wherefore doth the living* Lam. 3. 39, 8. *man complain? ſince, a man* (ſuffers) *for the puniſhment of his ſins*; ſince it is *our ſins, that withhold good things from us.* Since alſo, we conſidering this attribute may be aſſured, that all God's diſpenſations do aim, and tend to our good. Jer. 5. 25.

9. It ſhould alſo in gratitude toward God, and imitation of him, engage us to be good; kind and bountifull, peaceable, and apt to forgive; meek and gentle, pitifull and affectionate toward our brethren. *To be good and mercifull, as our heavenly Father is mercifull and benign even* toward the wicked and ungratefull; to be *kind unto one another, full of bowels, forgiving one another, as God for Chriſt's ſake hath forgiven us.*

Luke 6. 35, 36. 1 John 3. 16. Coloſſ. 3. 13. Eph. 4. 32.

10. Laſtly, We ought to have an eſpecial care of perverting this excellent truth by miſtakes and vain preſumptions; that we *do not turn the grace of God into wantonneſs*, or occaſion of licentious practice. Becauſe God is very good and mercifull, we muſt not conceive him to be fond, or ſlack, or careleſs; that he is apt to indulge us in ſin, or to connive at our preſumptuous tranſgreſſion of his laws. No; ἔπειται τῷ ἀγαθῷ, ἡ ἀγαθὸν, ἡ μισοπονηρία (*the hatred of wickedneſs is conſequent upon goodneſs even as ſuch*, as *Clemens Alex.* ſaith) God even as he is good, cannot but deteſt that which is oppoſite and prejudicial to goodneſs; he cannot but maintain the honour and intereſt thereof; he cannot, he will not endure us to diſhonour him, to wrong our neighbour, to ſpoil our ſelves. As he is a ſure friend to us, as his creatures, ſo he is an implacable enemy to us as impenitent rebels and apoſtates from our duty. *The wicked, and him that loveth violence his ſoul hateth.* As he is infinitely benign, ſo he is alſo perfectly *holy, and of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. He is not a God that hath pleaſure in wickedneſs, neither ſhall evil dwell with him. The fooliſh ſhall not ſtand in his ſight, he hateth all workers of iniquity. His face is againſt them that doe evil.* Finally, as God is gratious to all ſuch as are capable of his love, and qualified for his mercy; ſo he is an impartial and upright judge, who will deal with men according to their deſerts, according to the tenour of his laws and ordinances; according to his immutable decree and word; ſo that as we have great reaſon to truſt, and hope in him, ſo we have no true ground to preſume upon him; vainly to trifle, or inſolently to dally with him.

Jude 4. Pſal. 11. 5. Hab. 1. 13. Pſal. 5. 4. Pſal. 34. 16.

But I leave this point to be farther improved by your meditations.

Grant we beſeech thee, Almighty God, that the words which we have heard this day with our outward ears, may through thy grace be ſo grafted inwardly in our hearts, that they may bring forth in us the fruit of good living to the honour and praiſe of thy Name, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. Amen.

Sermon

Sermon XXXVIII.

No Reſpect of Perſons with GOD.

ROM. II. 11.

For, There is no reſpect of perſons with God.

IT is an ordinary conceit, grounded on a ſuperficial view of things, that Almighty God diſpenſeth his gifts with great inequality, and dealeth very partially with men; being laviſh in his bounty to ſome, but ſparing therein to others; ſlack and indulgent in calling ſome to accompt, but rigorous and ſevere in judgment toward others.

Which imagination often hath influence upon the affections and the actions of men; ſo that hence ſome men do highly preſume, others are much diſcouraged; ſome are apt to boaſt themſelves ſpecial darlings and favourites of heaven; others are tempted to complain of their being quite deſerted, or neglected thereby. Pſal. 73. 6.

But whoever more carefully will obſerve things, and weigh them with good conſideration, ſhall find this to be a great miſtake; and that in truth God diſtributeth his favours with very equal meaſures, he poiſeth the ſcales of juſtice with a moſt even hand; ſo that reaſonably no man ſhould be exalted, no man ſhould be dejected in mind, upon accompt of any conſiderable difference in God's regard towards him, and other perſons; the which is clearly diſcovered by God, or merely dependeth on his will and providence. Job 31. 6.

The advantages, which one man hath above another, being eſtimated morally, in reference to ſolid felicity and content, are indeed none; or are not abſolutely made by God, but framed by men unto themſelves. For

God is indifferently affected toward perſons as ſuch nakedly and privately conſidered; or as deveſted of moral conditions, qualifications and actions; He in his dealing, whether as benefactour or judge, purely conſidereth the reaſon and exigency of things, the intrinſick worth of perſons, the real merits of each cauſe; He maketh no arbitrary or groundleſs diſcriminations; he neither loveth and favoureth, nor loatheth and diſcountenanceth any perſon unaccomptably: He doth utterly diſclaim partiality, or reſpect of perſons, as a calumnious aſperſion on him, and a ſcandal to his providence.

Such in holy Scriptures he repreſenteth himſelf, upon various occaſions; declaring his perfect impartiality, and that nothing beſide the right and reaſon of caſes doth ſway with him; all other conſiderations being impertinent and inſignificant to him. For inſtance,

(Rom. 10. 12. 3. 29.) It is declared, that he hath no partial reſpect to nations; for the piety of *Job* an *Edomite*, of *Melchiſedeck* a *Canaanite*, of *Jethro* a *Madianite* were very pleaſing to him; he favourably did hear the prayers, and accept the alms of *Cornelius* a *Roman* Souldier; whereupon St. *Peter* made this
Acts 10. 31. general reflexion, *Of a truth I perceive, that God is no reſpecter of perſons; But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteouſneſs, is accepted with him.*

He is declared not to regard the external profeſſion of true Religion, but
(Gal. 5. 6. 6. 15. 3. 28.) Col. 3. 11. Rom. 2. 6, 9, 10. (10. 12. 3. 29.) real practice according to it; *He rendreth* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *to every man according to his deeds — tribulation and anguiſh upon every ſoul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew firſt, and alſo of the Gentile; but glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew firſt, and alſo to the Gentile; for* (addeth the Apoſtle, aſſigning the reaſon of this proceeding) *there is no reſpect of perſons with God.*

He is ſaid not *to reſpect faces*, or any exteriour appearances, however ſpecious in the eye of the world; according to that ſaying of God to *Sa-*
1 Sam. 16. 7. *muel*, at the choice of *David* before his brethren; *Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his ſtature, becauſe I have refuſed him; for the Lord ſeeth not as man ſeeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance; but the Lord looketh on the heart.*

It is expreſſed, that he hath no reſpect to the outward eſtate, or worldly rank and dignity of men; but that Princes and Peſants, Maſters and Servants, the honourable or wealthy, and the mean or poor are of equal
Job 34. 19. Sap. 6. 7. conſideration with him; *He* (ſaith *Job*) *accepteth not the perſons of Princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor; for they are all the work of his hands*; and St. *Paul* biddeth Maſters to deal fairly with their Servants,
Epheſ. 6. 9. Coloſſ. 3. 25. 4. 1. *knowing* (ſaith he) *that your Maſter is alſo in heaven; neither is there reſpect of perſons with him.*

We are taught, that He doth not regard even the moſt ſacred offices, or more worthy accompliſhments of men, in prejudice to the verity of things, or equity of the caſe; for hence St. *Paul* maintaineth his reſolute behaviour toward thoſe great pillars of Religion, St. *Peter* and St. *James*;
Gal. 2. 6. *Of theſe who ſeemed to be ſomewhat, whatſoever they were, it maketh no matter to me, God accepteth no man's perſon.*

It is frequently inculcated, that he hath no conſideration of any gifts, of ſacrifices, of ſervices preſented to him with ſiniſter intent, to compound for ſin, or excuſe from duty, to pervert juſtice, or palliate wrong; ac-
Deut. 10. 17. cording to that [declaration of *Moſes*, *The Lord your God is God of Gods, and Lord of Lords, a great God, a mighty and a terrible, which regardeth not perſons, nor taketh reward*; and that] charge of King *Jehoſhaphat* to his
2 Chron. 19. 7. Judges, *Let the fear of the Lord be upon you; take heed, and doe it; for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor reſpect of perſons, nor taking of gifts.* And, *Do not think* (ſaith the *Hebrew* Wiſeman) *to corrupt* (him) *with gifts; for ſuch he will not receive; and truſt not to unrighteous ſacrifices; for the Lord is Judge, and with him is no reſpect of perſons.*

Eccluſ. 35. 12. (Iſa. 1. 3. 61. 8. 66. 3. Prov. 15. 8. 21. 27. Amos 5. 21, 22. Jer. 6. 20. Mic. 6. 7, 8. Hoſ. 6. 6.

In fine, it is often generally declared, that God impartially diſpenſeth recompences, in juſt proportion, according to the deeds of men: *He*
Rom. 2. 11. Col. 3. 25. 1 Pet. 1. 17. (ſaith St. *Paul*) *that doeth wrong, ſhall receive for the wrong which he hath done, and there is no reſpect of perſons; And if* (ſaith St. *Peter*) *ye call upon the Father, who without reſpect of perſons judgeth according to every man's work, paſs the time of your ſojourning here in fear.*

There

There is nothing more frequently aſſerted, or more ſeriouſly urged in holy Scripture, than this point, that God will judge, and deal with men, not according to his abſolute, antecedent affections, but *according to their own works*, or the tenour of their practice, duly ſcann'd and eſtimated by the rules of juſtice; ſo that the really better man will certainly prove the happier, and the worſe man ſhall be the more wretched: *He will reward every man* (ſaith our Lord) κατὰ τὴν πρᾶξιν αὐτοῦ, *according to his practice*; *Every one* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *ſhall receive the things done in his body*, πρὸς τὰ ἔργα, *ſutably* (in juſt proportion) *to his works*; and *Each man ſhall receive* ἴδιον μισθὸν, *his own wages according to his own labour*; and *then praiſe* (or a due taxation) *ſhall be to every man from God: Behold* (ſaith He in the Revelation) *I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to recompence each man,* ὡς τὸ ἔργον αὐτοῦ ἔσται, *as his work ſhall be.*

Matt. 16. 27. Rom. 2. 6. Apoc. 2. 23. 20. 12. 2 Cor. 5. 10. 1 Cor. 3. 8. (Jer. 17. 10. 32. 19. Pſal. 62. 13.) 1 Cor. 4. 5. Apoc. 22. 12. Ἀποδοῦναι ἑκάστῳ.

Wherefore by ſacred teſtimonies it is abundantly manifeſt, that impartiality is a divine attribute, and perfection of God; the which (for our greater ſatisfaction, and farther illuſtration of the point) may be alſo evinced by divers arguments, ſome proving that it muſt be ſo, others ſhewing that it is ſo; ſome inferring it *à priori*, from the prime moſt avowed attributes of God's nature; and from his relations to men; others arguing it *à poſteriori*, from principal inſtances of God's proceedings and providential diſpenſations toward men.

Of the firſt ſort are theſe.

1. God is impartial, becauſe he is perfectly wiſe, and thence doth truly eſtimate perſons and things.

Wiſedom doth look evenly, with a free and pure (an indifferent and uncorrupt) eye upon all things; apprehending and eſteeming each as it is in it ſelf; making no diſtinction where it findeth none; not preferring one thing before another without ground of difference in them. It doth not fix a valuation on its objects, but acknowledgeth it, and taketh it for ſuch as it is in themſelves.

Wherefore God cannot have any blind affection, or fondneſs toward any perſon, grounded on no reaſon, or upon any unaccountable prejudice. No perſon can ſeem amiable, or odious to him, who is not in himſelf truly ſuch.

This argument is often uſed in Scripture; and to aſſure us of this truth it is there frequently affirmed, that God doth ſearch the hearts, doth try the ſpirits, doth weigh the actions of men: *The Lord* (ſaid *Hannah*) *is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed: All the ways of man* (ſaith *Solomon*) *are clean in his own eyes, but the Lord weigheth the ſpirits: His eyes* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*) *behold, his eye-lids try the children of men:* and, *O Lord of Hoſts* (ſaith *Jeremy*) *that judgeſt righteouſly, that trieſt the reins and the heart—Thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the ſons of men, to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings:* [*I the Lord ſearch the heart, I try the reins, to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.*]

1 Sam. 2. 3. Prov. 16. 2. Pſal. 11. 4. Jer. 11. 20. 20. 12. Jer. 32. 19. Jer. 17. 10.

2. God cannot be partial, becauſe he is perfectly righteous, juſt and holy. This reaſon adjoined to the former doth make up a complete demonſtration: for partiality doth proceed either from blindneſs of mind, or from perverſeneſs of will; He therefore, who hath both an exact knowledge of things, and a perfect rectitude of will, can no-wiſe be partial; the one enabling him to judge, the other diſpoſing him to affect things as they are and deſerve; to eſteem and love that which is indeed worthy and lovely; to deſpiſe and diſlike that which is deſpicable and odious;

to

to have no opinion, or affection toward a perſon, abſtracted from all qualifications; ſuch an one being no ſpecial object of a wiſe and juſt either eſteem or contempt, love or hatred.

As theſe cauſes are always inſeparably connected (for what is juſtneſs, but a diſpoſition of will, to follow, without deflexion, the dictates of wiſedom?) ſo the effect muſt neceſſarily follow; according to numberleſs teſtimonies in Scripture importing, that *The righteous Lord loveth righteouſneſs; but the wicked, and him that loveth violence, his ſoul hateth: The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous*----but *the face of the Lord is againſt them that doe evil.*

Pſal. 11. 7. (7.11. 33.5. 45.7. 146.8.) Pſal.11.5.5.5. Pſal.34. 15,16.

3. God is impartial, becauſe he is infinitely great and potent; whence all creatures are in the ſame degree inferiour, at the ſame diſtance remote from him; all are equally at his diſcretion and diſpoſal; he hath no need of any; what therefore ſhould incline him to regard one before another, excepting onely goodneſs, wherein he delighteth? So the Wiſe-man diſcourſeth, *He that is Lord of all, ſhall fear no man's perſon, neither ſhall he ſtand in awe of any man's greatneſs, for he hath made the ſmall and great, and careth for all alike.* So *Moſes* did imply, *The Lord your God is God of Gods, and Lord of Lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not perſons.*

Sap. 6. 7. Deut. 10. 17.

4. God is impartial, becauſe he is immenſely good and benign; both intenſively in the degree, and extenſively as to the objects of his goodneſs; ſo that he favoureth all equally, becauſe all thoroughly, ſo far as may well be according to their condition and capacity; whence if there be any difference or defect, the ground thereof is not in his nature or will, but in the different qualifications of creatures.

Exod. 24. 6,7. Numb. 14. 18. Pſal. 86. 5,15. 103. 8. 145. 8.

There is a double goodneſs or love of God; one abſolute, preceding all regard to perſonal qualities, or deeds; the other conditionate, and conſequent on ſpecial regards; in both theſe God is impartial; for the firſt is general and unconfined, according to that of the Pſalmiſt, *The Lord is good to all, and his mercies are over all his works*; and thoſe ſayings in the Goſpel, *He is kind unto the unthankfull, and to the evil; He maketh his ſun to riſe on the evil, and on the good; and ſendeth rain on the juſt, and on the unjuſt*; The ſecond is grounded on ſpecial reaſons of the caſe, and adapted to the rules of juſtice, demanding it; according whereto *The Lord is rich* (in mercy) *toward all that call upon him. He will fulfill the deſire of them that fear him*, and *preſerveth all them that love him.*

Pſal. 145.9,16. Luke 6. 35. Matt. 5. 45. Rom. 10. 12. Pſal. 145. 18. Pſal. 34. 15. Pſal. 145. 19, 20. 34. 9. 33. 18.

In the firſt there is no difference; in the ſecond the difference is made by our ſelves; being founded in our voluntary demeanour.

5. God is impartial toward all perſons, becauſe he hath the ſame (natural and original) relations toward all.

1. He is the maker and father of all; according to that of the Prophet, *Have we not all one Father? hath not one God created us?* and that of the Apoſtle, There is *One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all*; He therefore hath the ſame parental kindneſs toward all, the ſame tenderneſs for the good of each; He is not capable of that imperfection, which is obſervable in ſome parents, to be fond and indulgent to ſome children above others; but in his affection *The rich and poor* (as the Wiſe-man ſaith) *do meet together, the Lord is the maker of them all.*

Mal. 2. 10. Epheſ. 4. 6. Prov. 22. 2.

Hence

Hence *Job* did collect that *God accepteth not the perſons of Princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor; for* (ſaith he) *they are all the work of his hands.* Job 34. 39.

Hence the ſame holy Man did infer, that he was obliged to deal fairly with his own ſervants, for that God in judgment would conſider their caſe no leſs than his, upon this accompt, for *Did not he that made me in the womb, make him; and did not one faſhion us in the womb?* Job 31. 13, 14, 15. Job 31. 15.

Hence the Wiſe-man, who imitated *Solomon*, did argue an equality of gratious providence toward all, *He hath made the ſmall and the great, and careth for all alike.* Sap. 6. 7.

2. God is the common Lord of all; and therefore is concerned to protect all with the like care, to govern all with the ſame equity.

Hence St. *Paul* gathereth that God is indifferently willing to ſhew mercy, and diſpence bleſſings to all people; to confer the means of ſalvation, and to accept pious endeavours, without diſtinction of *Jew* or *Gentile*; *Is* (ſaith he) *he the God of the Jews onely? is he not alſo of the Gentiles?* and, *There is therefore no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the ſame Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.* Rom. 3. 29. Rom. 10. 12.

Hence the ſame Apoſtle doth urge Maſters to be juſt and kind to their ſervants; for that God as the common Maſter hath an equal reſpect to both; *knowing that your Maſter alſo is in heaven, and there is no reſpect of perſons with him.* Epheſ. 6. 9.

3. God is *the Saviour of all*; deſiring and deſigning that *all men ſhould be ſaved, and come to the knowledge of the truth*; being *willing that no man ſhould periſh, but that all ſhould come to repentance.* 1 Tim. 4. 10. 2. 3. 1 Tim. 2. 4. 2 Pet. 3. 9.

Wherefore out of philanthropy and love to mankind he ſent his Son to be *the Saviour of the world*; to *give himſelf a ranſome for all men*, to *taſte death for every man.* Tit. 3. 11. 2. 11. 1 John 4. 14. Luke 9. 56. John 3. 17. 12. 47. 2 Cor. 5. 19. 1 Tim. 2. 6. Heb. 2. 9.

And what greater inſtance could there be of perfect impartiality?

So by reaſons from the principal attributes and relations of God his impartiality may be deduced: The ſame alſo may be declared from his proceedings and dealings with men. For

1. God hath propoſed to all men indifferently the ſame terms and conditions of obtaining his love and favour, of enjoying his bounty and mercy, of obtaining rewards and felicity from him. Clem. *Paed. l.* 4

The ſame laws and rules of life are preſcribed to all perſons, as men, and as Chriſtians.

The natural dictates of reaſon, the precepts of holy Scripture, the great moral duties of Religion, by obſervance whereof God's favour is retained, and ſalvation aſſured, are of general concern and common obligation to all without exception.

God hath not framed one Law, or one Goſpel for Princes and great Men, another for Peſants and mean Artiſans; He hath not chalked out one way toward heaven for the rich, another for the poor to walk in; But all, *high and low, rich and poor one with another*, are tied to obſerve the precepts of piety, of charity, of juſtice, of temperance, ſobriety and chaſtity, of modeſty, humility and patience; none (great or ſmall) can otherwiſe than by proceeding in the common road of vertuous practice, arrive to happineſs. *He that doeth the will of my Father that is in heaven, ſhall enter into the kingdom of heaven.* Pſal. 49. 2. Matt. 7. 21.

Matt. 19. 17. Matt. 7. 13. Luke 13. 24. Pſal. 34. 12. Apoc. 22. 14. Rom. 2. 7.

If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments: Enter in through the ſtrait gate; Bleſſed are they that doe his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life; To them, who by patient continuance in well-doing ſeek glory and honour and immortality, eternal life will be conferred; Theſe are the grand infallible maxims, the fixt irreverſible decrees, expreſſing the general duty and doom of mankind, according to the eternal reaſon of things, and the declared will of God Almighty, our Sovereign Governour and Judge.

John 15. 14.

Whoever it is, that will pleaſe God, that will have his love, that will be happy by his grace, muſt humbly ſubmit to God's will, muſt faithfully obey God's laws, muſt carefully walk in God's way; from this courſe there can be no exemption, no diſpenſation, no ſpecial privilege for any perſon whatever.

As all men naturally, by indiſſoluble bands of obligation, are the ſubjects and ſervants of God; ſo God indiſpenſably and inexcuſably doth require the ſame loyalty and fidelity, the ſame diligence, the ſame reverence from all.

Great men ſometimes may live, as if they conceited themſelves free from the obligations, which bind other men; as if they had not ſouls (as we poor mortals have) to be ſaved, or were to be ſaved in ſome other way; as if obedience to the divine laws doth not touch them, but onely doth belong to the commonalty; as if they had ſpecial indulgence to live in pride, luxury and ſloth, might warrantably practiſe injuſtice, oppreſſion, revenge; might *cum privilegio* be lewd and laſcivious, with-hold their debts, take God's name in vain, neglect devotion and the ſervice of God; But in thus doing they much abuſe themſelves; for they no leſs than others are obnoxious to guilt, and to puniſhment for ſuch miſdemeanours againſt the divine laws. In truth, if there be any difference in the caſe, it is onely this that they in all equity, ingenuity and gratitude are obliged to a more ſtrict, more faithfull, more diligent obſervance of God's laws; they being more indebted to God for his ſpecial bounty to them; they having larger talents and advantages committed to their truſt, their deportment being of higher conſequence, and moſt influential on the world, they

Luke 12. 48.

being liable to render an accompt according to that juſt rule, *Unto whom much is given, of him much ſhall be required*; whence their eminency of condition doth not excuſe them from common duties, but doth advance their obligation, will aggravate their neglect, will enflame their reckoning, will plunge them deeper into wofull puniſhment; according to that of the

Sap. 6. 5, 6.

Wiſe-man; *A ſharp judgment ſhall be to them that are in high places; for mercy will ſoon pardon the meaneſt, but mighty men ſhall be mightily tormented.*

2. All perſons have the ſame means, the ſame aids, the ſame ſupports afforded to them, for ability to perform their duty, and attain their happineſs.

The word of God, as the light of heaven, doth indifferently ſhine to all men, for inſtructing their minds, for directing their practice, for *guiding their feet in the way of peace.*

The divine grace is ever at hand ready to aſſiſt all thoſe, who ſincerely and ſeriouſly do apply themſelves to ſerve God.

Seaſonable comforts are never wanting to ſupport thoſe who need them,

Pſal. 147. 3. (146. 7---) Pſal. 34. 6---

and who in their diſtreſs ſeek them from God, who *healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds*; ſo that when *The poor man crieth, the Lord heareth him, and ſaveth him out of his troubles.*

The univerſal good Spirit of God (the fountain of light and wiſedom,

1 Cor. 12. 7.

of ſpiritual power and ſtrength, of conſolation and joy) is communicated according

according to the needs of men, and exigencies of occaſion; preventing them by direction to the right way, by reclaiming them from ill courſes, by exciting in them good thoughts, and good deſires; quickning their good reſolutions, and aſſiſting in the purſuit of them; enabling them to reſiſt temptations, and to combat with their ſpiritual adverſaries; to ſuch beſt purpoſes the holy Spirit is given to all in needfull ſeaſons and meaſures; eſpecially to thoſe, who do earneſtly ſeek it, do faithfully uſe it, do treat it well. Luke 11. 13.

3. God hath provided, and doth propoſe to all men the ſame encouragements for obedience, the ſame puniſhments for tranſgreſſion; the which being the ſame in kind do onely differ in degree, proportionably to the good deeds, or bad demerits of perſons.

God hath appointed one heaven for all pious and vertuous perſons; of what nation, of what rank, of what condition ſoever they are; He hath *prepared thoſe things, which eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, nor heart of man conceived for all that love him.* For *all* that have *fought the good fight,* and *kept the faith,* and *love his appearance, the Lord, the righteous judge, hath laid up a crown of righteouſneſs.* Col. 3. 11. 1 Cor. 2. 9. 2 Tim. 4. 7.

Immortality of life, an unfading crown of glory, a Kingdom that cannot be ſhaken, unſpeakable joys, endleſs bliſs God hath covenanted, and promiſed to all his faithfull ſervants; to all who in his way pleaſe to accept and embrace them, ὁ θέλων, *He that willeth, let him take of the water of life, freely;* And what greater rewards could there be aſſigned? what room is there for partiality, where all are capable of the ſame equally great, becauſe in a manner immenſe felicity? *Many* (ſaith our Saviour) *ſhall come from the Eaſt and from the Weſt, and from the North, and from the South; and ſhall ſit down with Abraham and with Iſaac and with Jacob in the Kingdom of heaven.* Luke 22. 29. Apoc. 22. 17. Matt. 8. 11. Luke 13. 29.

Lazarus the poor beggar, ſhall reſt with the illuſtrious *Moſes*, and the noble *Daniel*, with *David*, and *Hezekiah*, and *Joſiah*, and all pious Princes in the boſome of *Abraham.* The poor Fiſhermen, the painfull Tentmakers, the ſorry Publicans ſhall reign together with *Conſtantine*, and *Theodoſius*, and all thoſe good Princes, who have faithfully ſerved God, and promoted his glory. The rich, well uſing their wealth, may obtain that ſtate, *treaſuring up to themſelves a good foundation againſt the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life*; The poor, contentedly bearing their condition, have a good title thereto, expreſſed in thoſe words, *Bleſſed be ye poor, for yours is the Kingdom of God.* 1 Tim. 6. 19. Luke 12. 33. 16. 9. Luke 6. 20.

On the other hand the ſame diſmal puniſhments are threatned to all preſumptuous, contumacious, and impenitent tranſgreſſours of God's law, however dignified or diſtinguiſhed; be they Princes, or Subjects, noble or baſe, wealthy or indigent; the ſame unquenchable fire, the ſame gnawing worm, the ſame weeping, and wailing, and gnaſhing of teeth; the ſame utter darkneſs; the ſame burning lake of brimſtone; the ſame extreme diſconſolate anguiſh is reſerved for them all: *Depart from me, Go ye curſed into everlaſting fire,* will be the doom pronounced on *all the workers of iniquity; Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguiſh will be upon every ſoul that doeth evil.* Matt. 7. 23. 25. 41. Luke 13. 27. Rom. 2. 8, 9.

No regard will be had to the quality of men in this world; for *the rich man*, who *was cloathed in purple and fine linnen, and fared ſumptuouſly every day*, was not excuſed from *hell*, and *torment*; there is a *Tophet ordained of old, even for Kings*; *mighty men ſhall be mightily tormented*, if they have mightily ſinned. Luk. 16. 19, 23. Jam. 5. 1. Luke 6. 24. Iſa. 30. 33. Sap. 6. 6.

Even present encouragements of vertue in this life, The joys and comforts of God's holy Spirit, the sweet elapses of spiritual consolation in devotion, *the peace of God*, and delicious sense of his love, the cheerfull satisfaction of a good conscience, the *joy in believing* God's truth, and hoping for accomplishment of his promises, the delight in obeying God's commandments, the blessing of God upon good undertakings and happy success therein, the *co-operation of all things for good to them who love God*, the
Ps. 37. 5. 1. 3. Rom. 8. 28. Psal. 145. 19. 37. 4. 34. 10. supply of all wants, and satisfaction of all desires, the experimental assurance of God's constant protection and gratious providence over those who fear him, and trust in him, (according to numberless declarations and promises in holy Scripture) are indifferently dispensed to all, who shall use the means to attain them, in way of conscientious practice.

As correspondently the temporal discouragements from sin (crosses,
Psal. 11. 6. 73. 19. 32. 10. Is. 48. 22. 57. 20. 54. 17. disappointments, vexations, miseries) are without exception allotted to all transgressours of God's law, according to many denunciations therein.

Bonus omnipotens ita curat universos tanquam singulos, ita singulos tanquam solos. Aug. *Conf.*

4. The impartiality of God doth appear from his universal providence, carefully watching over all and every person, dispensing good things to each, according to his need, without distinction.

Is any man in extreme want, his liberal hand presently doth reach forth
Psal. 107. 9. Psal. 145. 16. a supply; for *He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness*; *He openeth his hand, and satisfieth the desire of every living thing.*

Is any man in distress? the Lord is ready to afford relief; according
Psal. 107. 9, 13, 19, 28. Psal. 34. 6. to that repeated burthen of the 107*th* Psalm, *Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses?*

Is any man engaged in sin and guilt? He is patient and long-suffering;
146. 7— 147. 6— Psal. 103. 8— 106. 8, 44. 78. 38. not powring forth his anger, not with-holding his mercies; letting his Sun arise, and his shoures descend upon the most unworthy and ingratefull; this he doth so generally, that commonly by apparent events it is not easily discernible, to whom God beareth special favour; according to
Eccles. 9. 1, 2. that observation of the Preacher, *No man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them*; *all things* coming *alike to all.* How then can any man complain of partiality in him, who exerciseth so unconfined bounty, clemency and patience?

Psal. 146. 147. 10. 14. 9. 9. 34. 18. Isa. 25. 4. If there be any considerable difference, it is onely this, that God hath a peculiar care of the poor, the afflicted, the oppressed, the helpless and disconsolate, who do most need (and thence are most induced to seek) his succour and comfort; being also commonly better qualified to receive them; as is frequently declared in Scripture.

It is true, that God hath his particular friends, his favourites, his privados, whom he doth specially regard and countenance; upon whom he conferreth extraordinary boons and graces; namely those who do love, who do fear, who do trust in, who do honour him, who do obey him;
Rom. 8. 28. Psal. 145. 20. 31. 23. Psal. 34. 9. Psal. 145. 19. Psal. 34. 22. 1 Sam. 2. 30. Psal. 146. 8. Psal. 34. 15. John 15. 14. concerning whom it is said, *We know that all things work together for good to them that love God*; and *The Lord preserveth all those that love him*; *There is no want to them that fear him*; *He will fulfill the desire of them that fear him, he also will hear their cry, and will save them: The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants, and none of them that trust in him, shall be desolate: Them that honour me, I will honour: The Lord loveth the righteous*; *The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry*; *Ye are my friends, if ye doe whatsoever I command you:*

But

But evidently there is no partiality in this; for he doth not favour them irreſpectively as perſons, but as in juſtice ſpecially qualified for favour; friendſhip, dutifulneſs, reverence toward him being the higheſt vertues, and arguing a mind endewed with diſpoſitions (with equity, with ingenuity, with gratitude, with ſober wiſedom, with love of truth and goodneſs) which demand a correſpondence of love and reſpect from God himſelf. And as we do not hold a man partial, who beareth a ſpecial affection and regard to thoſe, who expreſs good-will, who deal kindly and fairly with them, who ſerve them faithfully, and pay them due reſpect; ſo neither is God partial, if he doth ſpecially bleſs good men upon the like accompts.

Eſpecially conſidering, that God doth not ſo favour mere pretenders, who profeſs to love and honour him, but do not love true goodneſs; fond, ſuperſtitious, hypocritical people, who *call Lord, Lord*, but practiſe iniquity; who think to pleaſe him by affected ſervices; who court and flatter him with their lips; who would bribe him with their gifts and ſacrifices. Matt. 7. 22. Luke 6. 46. Tit. 1. 16. Matt. 15. 9. Col. 2. 22. Matt. 15. 8.

5. All Chriſtians, without diſtinction, have the ſame illuſtrious relations, and honourable privileges, the moſt great and glorious that can be imagined.

Of what greater honour is a man capable, than to be adopted into the bloud-royal of heaven, *to be called*, to be the Sons of God? *Ye are all the Sons of God, by faith in Chriſt Jeſus. God ſent forth his Son, born of a woman, that he might redeem us* — and, *that we might receive the adoption of Sons.* (Col. 3. 11.) 1 Cor. 12. 13. Gal. 3. 28. 3. 26. 4. 5. Rom. 8. 16.

Ἴδετε ποταπὴν ἀγάπην· *Behold* (ſaith St. *John*) *what love the Father hath given us, that we ſhould be called the Sons of God.* This is a *privilege*, which God hath given, which *Chriſt* hath purchaſed for us all. And *whoſoever received him*, he gave *them* ἐξουσίαν ταύτην, (this power, this privilege, this advantage) *that they ſhould become the Sons of God.* 1 John 3. 1. John 1. 12. Gal. 4.

To what higher dignity can any one pretend, than to be heir of a Kingdom? by the moſt infallible aſſurance that can be; by covenant, by promiſe of God; ſuch are all good Chriſtians, God's children; for *if ſons, then heirs* (ſaith the *Apoſtle*) *heirs of God, co-heirs with Chriſt*: Heirs of God's Kingdom; for, *Hearken* (ſaith St. *James*) my beloved brethren, *Hath not God choſen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the Kingdom, which he hath promiſed to them that love him.* Rom. 8. 17. Gal. 4. 7. Tit. 3. 7. Heb. 1. 14. Jam. 2. 5.

Inherit the Kingdom prepared for you. Matt. 25. 34.

Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleaſure to give you a Kingdom. Luke 12. 32.

I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me. 22. 29.

To what higher pitch can the moſt ambitious ſoul aſpire, than to be a King?

Such St. *John* ſaith, that our Lord hath conſtituted every good Chriſtian; *partakers*, not of a carnal, an earthly, a temporal Kingdom (which is unſtable, is ſubject to various chances and croſſes, cannot endure long, or laſt any conſiderable time) but of a ſpiritual, a celeſtial, an eternal Kingdom, *which cannot be ſhaken*; which hath continual reſt, peace, joy. Rev. 1. 6. 5. 10. 1. 9. 2 Tim. 4. 18. ἐπουράνιον. 2 Pet. 1. 11. αἰώνιον.

We are by God *called unto* his Kingdom and glory. Heb. 12. 28.

——tranſlated into the Kingdom of his own dear Son. βασιλείαν. 1 Theſſ. 2. 12.

To be the brethren of *Chriſt*; who is the Sovereign *Lord of Glory, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.* Col. 1. 13.

Is

Is it not a conſiderable honour to be the friends of our Lord? ſo is every poor ſoul, which hath the conſcience to ſerve him faithfully; for, *Ye are my friends, if ye doe whatſoever I command you.*

John 15. 14.

All are Citizens, free denizens, of the heavenly Commonwealth; συμπολίται τῶν ἁγίων—

Phil. 3. 20. Heb. 13. 20. 12. 22. Eph. 2. 19.

6. All men are liable to the ſame judgment, at the ſame tribunal, before that one impartial, inflexible Judge, who cannot be corrupted with gifts, or dazled with ſhews, or moved by any ſiniſter regards.

Deut. 10. 7. (Col. 3. 25.)

All perſons muſt ſtand before that Bar upon equal ground; without any advantage; according to that repreſentation of St. *John*; *I ſaw the dead, ſmall and great, ſtand before God, and the books were opened--- and the dead were judged out of thoſe things which were written in the books, according to their works.*

Apoc. 20. 12.

The greateſt Monarchs, the mightieſt Potentates, the moſt redoubtable Warriours, and ſucceſsfull Conquerours (the *man, who made the earth to tremble, that did ſhake Kingdoms;*) *that made the world as a wilderneſs, and deſtroyed the cities thereof*; who affected *to aſcend into heaven, and to exalt his throne above the ſtars of God, to aſcend above the heights of the clouds, and to be like the moſt high.*

Iſ. 14. 16, 17. v. 13, 14. (v. 11)

There ſhall they ſtand bare and deveſted of all their phantaſtry; their ſplendid pomp, their numerous retinue, their guards, their paraſites.

No conſideration there will be had of their windy titles, of their gay attire, and glittering pomp.

No reſpect will be had to the dread of their name, to the fame of their proweſs; to that ſpurious glory, for which they unſetled mankind, and overturned the world; their actions will be ſtrictly ſcann'd, according to the rules of God's law, and common equity.

They will be put to anſwer for all the violences and outrages, for all the ſpoils and rapines, for all the bloud and ſlaughters, for all the ruines, devaſtations and deſolations their cruel ambition hath cauſed; for all the ſins they have committed, and all the miſchiefs they have done.

They who now have ſo many flaterers and adorers, will not then find one advocate to plead for them.

Thus it may appear that God is impartial.

But there are divers obvious exceptions againſt this doctrine. As,

Obj. 1. Is it not apparent that the gifts of God are diſtributed with great inequality?

Doth not one ſwim in wealth and plenty, while another coucheth under the burthen of extreme want and penury?

Are not ſome perched aloft in high dignity, while others crawl upon the ground, and grovel in deſpicable meanneſs?

Are not ſome *cloathed with purple and fine linen, and fare deliciouſly every day*; while others ſcarce find rags to cover them, and *lie at the door* begging for relief?

Luke 16. 19, 20,—

Do not ſome thrive and proſper in their affairs, while others are diſappointed and croſſed in their undertakings?

Was it not truly obſerved of ſome perſons (and thoſe leaſt deſerving good fortune) *They are incloſed in their own fat--- Their eyes ſtand out with fatneſs, they have more than heart could wiſh?*

Pſal. 17. 10— 73. 7. Job 21. 7— 12. 6.

And whence doth this difference come, but from God's hand; *who* (as the *Apoſtle* asketh) *maketh thee to differ* from another, but God, the diſpoſer of all things?

Jer. 12. 1. Hab. 1. 16. 1 Cor. 4. 7.

To

To this exception I answer:

1. That temporal things are so inconsiderable, that they scarce deserve to come into the balance, or to be computed; for they have but the same proportion to spiritual things, as time hath to eternity; or a finite to an infinite; which is none at all. Rom. 8. 18. Λογίζομαι γὰρ ὅτι οὐκ ἄξια— 2 Cor. 4. 17.

What partiality therefore is there, if God in mercy and patience bestow on bad men a farthing in the temporal *consolations* of this life (if the universal Father give a small *portion in this life* to untoward children) while he reserveth infinite millions for his obedient children? Luke 6. 24. 16. 25. Psal. 17. 14.

2. The goods of fortune commonly are dispensed not by a special hand of God, but according to the general course of providence: And what partiality is he guilty of, who scattereth money into a crowd of poor people; although in scrambling some get more than other; and often the worst (being most bold and fierce) do get most?

3. Indeed the receiving those gifts, is no sign of God's special regard; as the *Preacher* well observed; *No man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them; All things come alike to all, there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked.* Eccles. 9. 1, 2.

4. God (as St. *Austin* saith) purposely doth sparingly deal these things to good men, and freely bestoweth them on bad men, to shew how little we ought to value them; how much inferiour they are to spiritual goods. For surely he would give the best things to his friends, and the worst to his enemies.

5. Even temporal gifts are dispensed with a very even hand; for, if barring injudicious fancie and vulgar opinion, we rightly prize things, we compare the conveniences and inconveniences of each state, it will be hard to judge which hath the advantage.

Wealth hath more advantages for pleasure; but it hath also more cares, more fears, more crosses, more dangers, more troubles, more temptations.

It hath more plenty, but withall it hath less safety, less ease, less liberty, less quiet, less real enjoyment.

Set the distraction of the rich man's mind against the toil of the poorest man's body; the nauseous surfeits of one against the griping hunger of the other.

That which really doth constitute a state happy, content, may be common to both, or wanting to either, as the person is disposed.

6. The goods of fortune are not purely gifts, but talents deposited in trust for God's service, for which a proportionable return is expected; so that he that hath less of them, hath a less burthen to bear, and an easier accompt to render.

7. Many gifts are not dispensed with personal regard, but for publick good; and therefore all have an interest in them.

The wealth, the power, the reputation, the prosperity of a Prince, of a Nobleman, of a Gentleman are not his, but his neighbours; for governing, for protecting, for encouraging, for assisting whom they are conferred; the world not being able to subsist in order and peace without subordinate ranks, and without answerable means to maintain them.

Obj. 2. It is apparent, that God dispenseth his grace, the light of knowledge, and means of salvation very unequally; some Nations living in the clear sunshine of the Gospel, while others *sit in darkness and the shadow of death*; whole Nations being detained in barbarous and brutish ignorance. Luke 1. 69. Matt. 4. 16. Eph. 4. 18. 2. 1— Tit. 3. 3. 1 Pet. 4. 3.

To

To anſwer this exception fully, would require much diſcourſe; it being a dark and difficult point; but briefly we may ſay:

1. That God diſpenſeth meaſures of grace, according to a juſt, yet inſcrutable wiſedom, knowing what uſe will be made thereof, and what *fruit* men will *bear*: It may therefore be a favour not to diſpenſe light to them, who are not prepared to embrace and improve it well.

2. No man can tell what God doeth in preparation, and what obſtructions are made by men to his grace.

3. As lower means of grace are conferred, ſo proportionably leſs returns are expected.

4. How hard ſoever it may be to deſcry the reaſon of God's proceedings in this caſe, yet aſſuredly it is juſt, and our ignorance of it, ſhould not prejudice the belief of thoſe general truths, which are ſo plainly declared, concerning the univerſal benignity, and impartial equity of God.

Obj. 3. Is it not in holy Scripture ſometimes aſſerted, that God doth act arbitrariouſly, and abſolutely; diſpenſing his bounty and mercy, without regard to any quality in men, or deed committed by them, either in whole, or in proportion. ---God ſaith, *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy*--- and, *Is it not lawfull for me to doe what I will with mine own?* Is not a plain inſtance of this dealing alledged by St. *Paul*, concerning *Jacob* and *Eſau*, that *before the children were born, or had done either good or evil*, God ſaid, *the elder ſhall ſerve the younger*; and in regard thereto (in the *Prophet*) *Jacob have I loved, but Eſau have I hated.*

Rom. 9. 15. Matt. 20. 15. Rom. 9. 13.

We anſwer briefly, that

Such expreſſions do import, not that God acteth abſolutely in the thing it ſelf, but *quoad nos*; not that he acteth without reaſon, but upon reaſons (tranſcending our capacity, or our means to know it) incomprehenſible or undiſcernible to us; not that he can give no accompt, but is not obliged to render any to us: that the methods of his providence commonly are inſcrutable; that his proceedings are not ſubject to our examination and cenſure; that his acting doth ſufficiently authorize and juſtifie it ſelf; that is high preſumption und arrogance for us to ſcan, ſift, or conteſt, or cavil at the equity or wiſedom of God's acting.

Rom. 11. 33. Rom. 9. 20.

That God doth not act according to neceſſity, but is free in diſpenſing his mercy, and applying it to any perſon, ſo that they have nothing to challenge upon accompt of their own deſerts or works; but muſt refer all to his mere bounty.

However there can be nothing in theſe myſteries of predeſtination and providence, which really doth ſubvert an aſſertion ſo often clearly expreſſed, and ſo well grounded in reaſon, or the conſideration of God's nature, attributes, ordinary way of acting, &c.

Whatever expreſſions are repugnant thereto in ſound, whatever inſtances (depending on occult cauſes) in appearance do croſs it; it yet muſt ſtand, that God is impartially mercifull, benign, juſt, &c.

(Iſa. 49. 1, 5.) Jer. 1. 5. Luke 1. 15. Gal. 1. 5.

Obj. 4. Had not *Jeremy*, St. *John Baptiſt*, St. *Paul* abſolute favours and graces conferred on them, who were *ſanctified*, and ſeparated from the womb to be Prophets and Apoſtles?

Jer. 1. 10. Luke 1. 16. Acts 9. 15 26. 16----

Reſp. Theſe favours were in deſign not ſo much particular, and perſonal, as general and publick; thoſe perſons being raiſed up by God upon occaſions as needfull inſtruments (*elect veſſels*) of his providence, to inſtruct men,

men, and to reduce them to God; ſo that God in raiſing up ſuch extraornary perſons, did expreſs his common goodneſs to mankind.

The like may be ſaid of that ſpecial favour which was vouchſafed to the holy Virgin, who was κεχαριτωμένη, and *bleſſed among women*, for the general good of mankind. Χαῖρε κεχαριτωμένη. Luke 1. 28.

The conſideration of this Point is very uſefull, and may diſpoſe us to many ſorts of good practice.

1. No man ſhould preſume upon God's dealing with him more favourably than with others; as if he were a darling, or favourite; that God will indulge him in the commiſſion of any thing prohibited, or in omiſſion of any duty.

No man ſhould indulge himſelf in any thing, upon a conceit that God will indulge him; or overſee --and that in this ſenſe, *He ſeeth not iniquity in Jacob.*

No man ſhould be puffed up with conceit, that God hath a ſingular regard to him. For all ſuch conceits are groundleſs and vain; in them men do miſerably delude themſelves.

No man can otherwiſe found any aſſurance of God's ſpecial love to him, than upon a good conſcience; teſtifying, that he doth ſincerely love God, and endeavour faithfully to obey his commandments. 1 Joh. 3. 19-21.

3. No man ſhould deſpair of God's favour; ſeeing God hath no particular averſation from any; but every perſon hath the ſame grounds of hope.

If we can buckle our hearts to obſerve our duty, we may be ſure to be accepted.

If thou doeſt well, ſhalt thou not be accepted? Gen. 4. 7.

4. No man ſhould be diſcouraged for his condition, or fortune. Since in allotting it to him God had no disfavour, nor did intend him ill.

God hath no leſs regard to him, than to perſons of the moſt high, wealthy, proſperous ſtate.

5. No man ſhould repine, murmur or complain of God's dealing, as if he were unkindly uſed, more than others. For there is no ſuch thing. God dealeth alike kindly with all.

6. No man, upon accompt of his rank, wealth, or worldly advantages ſhould boaſt or pride himſelf; ſeeing thence he partaketh no more, than his meaneſt, and pooreſt neighbour, of the principal advantage, God's favour.

7. No man, upon ſuch accompts, ſhould deſpiſe his neighbour, *the brother of low degree:* for upon theſe accompts it appeareth, that the *Wiſeman* ſaith truly, that *He is void of wiſedom, who deſpiſeth his neighbour*; ſeeing no man can be deſpicable, whom God regardeth; ſeeing *God* (as *Elihu* ſaith) *is mighty, and deſpiſeth not any*; ſeeing the meaneſt perſon ſtandeth on equal terms with the greateſt in the eye of God. Jam. 1. 9. Ὁ ταπεινός. Prov. 11. 12. 14. 21. Job 36. 5. (Jam. 2. 6.)

8. Great men ſhould not take themſelves for another ſort of creatures, or another race of men than their poor neighbours; that the world is theirs, and all things are for them; that they may doe what they pleaſe; that they are exempted from laws, which oblige others; for in moral and ſpiritual accompts they are upon a level with others. *Quorum fatis cœlum omne vacavit.* Luc. *lib.* 7.

They are but fellow-ſubjects, and fellow-ſervants with others; all accomptable to the ſame Maſter.

9. Superiours hence ſhould be moved to deal fairly, gently, and courteouſly with inferiours; ſeeing theſe are their fellow-ſervants; equally conſiderable as themſelves with the great Maſter of the Family.

This is the uſe to which St. *Paul* applieth the conſideration;

Col. 4. 1. 3. *ult.* *Maſters give unto your ſervants that which is juſt and equal, knowing that ye have a Maſter in heaven---- Ye Maſters doe the ſame things unto them,* (that is, be conſcientiouſly good to them, as they faithfull to you) *forbearing threatning;* Eph. 6. 9. *knowing that your Maſter alſo is in heaven, neither is there reſpect of perſons with him.*

10. This conſideration ſhould preſerve us from ſuperſtition, or thinking to pleaſe or ſatisfie God, win his favour, or appeaſe his diſpleaſure, by uncouth ways, which he hath not preſcribed to all men; to corrupt him by our ſacrifices and oblations; our flatteries, glozings, collogueings with him; ſo that he will indulge us in any bad thing, or excuſe us from our true duty, in regard to thoſe affected ſervices.

We do herein but abuſe our ſelves; for he will not approve or accept us upon any other accompt, than of diſcharging our duty, being truly righteous and good. Coloſſ. 2.— Mic. 6. 7, 8.

11. It is matter of comfort and ſatisfaction to a man, who is conſcious of his ſincerity, [that (whatever his condition and circumſtances be) that God will have a fair regard thereto, and will not reject him.

Job 31. 4--6. It was ſo to *Job*; *Doth not God ſee my ways, and count all my ſteps-- Let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know my integrity.*

Jam. 2. 1, 9. Prov. 28. 21. 12. The conſideration of this Point ſhould keep us from partial reſpects of men.

Not to admire the ſtate of great men, nor to yield them undue deferences (in prejudice to meaner perſons, making greater difference than there is ground for) not to flatter, or humour them in an immoderate meaſure, or unbeſeeming manner.

Οὐ μέλᾳ σοι περὶ ἑνὸς. Matt. 22. 16. This is that which St. *James* doth urge in his 2d *Chapter*; as a very unequal thing.

Θαυμάζειν πρόσωπα. Jude. We ſhould imitate God; we ſhould conſider that our opinions and affections ſhould reſemble his.

Levit. 19. 15. Deut. 1. 17. 16. 19. Prov. 24. 23. 16. 5. 28. 21. Jam. 2. 9. As in exteriour judgment no reſpect is to be had to the rich above the poor; ſo neither in the interiour judgment or eſteem of our mind; to which St. *James* ſeemeth to apply the law; *If ye have reſpect to perſons, ye commit ſin, and are convinced of the law as tranſgreſſours.*

13. This ſhould keep us from envying at thoſe who have more worldly advantages.

14. It ſhould keep us from being offended, or ſcandalized, or perverted into falſe notions of God, upon occaſion of any myſterious points, or hard expreſſions importing abſolute and arbitrary proceedings of God, in predeſtination or providence. For however they are to be underſtood, they cannot derogate from the impartial goodneſs and juſtice of God.

15. This conſideration ſhould engage us readily to pay due reſpect and reverence to Princes, to Magiſtrates, to all our Superiours.

For hence we ſee, that the reaſon why we are commanded to honour and fear them is, not their worldly grandeur of wealth or power, (things of ſmall conſideration with God) but it ſtandeth on a more ſolid ground, their ſacred relations to God, as his repreſentatives and officers; who in his name and behalf do adminiſter juſtice, and protect right and innocence, encourage vertue, maintain order and peace in the world.

Though God doth not favour their perſons as rich and mighty; yet he regardeth his own character imprinted on them, he regardeth his honour and intereſt concerned in their reſpect, he regardeth the publick good of mankind, which they are conſtituted to promote. He conſiders them

as

as the *Miniſters of his Kingdom*, and inſtruments of conveying his benefits to mankind.

Whence he *giveth ſalvation to Kings*, he by his law, and by his providence doth guard and ſecure them from violence, from contempt, from diſreſpect.

In honouring them, we honour the authority of God; and the character of Divinity ſtamped on them; we ſerve our ſelves, for whoſe ſake they are conſtituted, for whoſe good they watch. Rom. 14. 4. Εἰς ἀγαθόν.

It may alſo engage us the more gladly and fully to yield them their due reſpect, to conſider, that their condition is not invidious; or their caſe better than other mens; ſeeing they are accomptable to God for the advantages of it; ſeeing that God hath no regard to them upon accompt of that greatneſs which dazleth our eyes: ſeeing that for all the burthens they ſuſtain, for all the cares they take, for all the pains they endure, for our good and publick ſervice, they can receive ſo inconſiderable a recompence from us.

Finally,

It ſhould engage us to be very carefull of our ways, and diligent in our obedience; ſeeing there is no other way poſſible of pleaſing God, of gaining his favour and friendſhip, of appeaſing his diſpleaſure, of ſtanding upright, and coming off well in his judgment; this is St. *Peter*'s inference, with which I conclude.

If ye call on the Father, who without reſpect of perſons judgeth according to every man's work, paſs the time of your ſojourning here in fear. 1 Pet. 1. 17.

SERMON XXXIX.

The Doctrine of Univerſal Redemption aſſerted and explain'd.

1 TIM. IV. 10.

-----The living God; who is the Saviour of all men, eſpecially of thoſe that believe.

Θεῷ γὰρ πολλῶν ὄντων, ἐφ' ὧν θαυμάζεσθαι, ἁδὲν ὅπως ὡς τὸ πάντων εὐεργέτην ἰδιώτατον. Naz. Orat. 26.

THERE are two Points of Doctrine here plainly aſſerted by Saint *Paul*, which I ſhall endeavour to explain, and to apply: *One*, that God is the Saviour of all men; *another*, that he is peculiarly the Saviour of the faithfull. For the *firſt*,

God in many reſpects may truly be conceived and called *the Saviour of all men*; for the word *ſave* doth in a large acception denote the con-

ferring any kind of good: as implying a removal of need, or indigence. Whence *God is the Saviour of all men* as the universal preserver and upholder of all things in their being and natural state, as it is in the *Psalm: Thou, Lord, savest man and beast*, or, as the general benefactour, who *is good to all, and whose mercies are over all his works*; who *maketh his Sun to rise upon the good and bad, rains upon the just and unjust, is kind* and benign even *to the ingratefull and evil:* or, as the common assistent, protectour, and deliverer of all men who in need or distress have recourse unto him for succour and relief, according to what is said in the *Psalms*; *The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble: The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him. They cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses.*

Psal. 36. 6. Old Transl. and the LXX. σώσις, or σώζις. Psal. 145. 9. Matt. 5. 46. Luke 6. 35. Psal. 9. 9. 145. 18. 146. 7, &c. 107. 13, &c. 68. 19, 20.

In these kinds of senses especially respecting natural and temporal good, it is manifest that *God is the Saviour of all men.* But that he is in this place termed such in a higher sense, with regard to mercies and blessings of a more excellent kind, and greater consequence (to mercies and blessings of a spiritual nature, and relating to the eternal state of men) may from several considerations appear.

1. For that according to *Apostolical* use the word *Saviour, save, salvation*, are wont to bear an *Evangelical* sense, relating to the benefits by our Lord *Jesus Christ* procured, purchased, and dispensed, concerning the future state of men.

2. For that questionless St. *Paul* doth here intend God to be *Saviour* of the faithfull in this higher sense, and consequently he means him in the same sense (although not in the same degree and measure, or not altogether to the same effects and purposes) a *Saviour of all men.*

3. Because 'tis plain that in other places of *Scripture*, like and parallel to this, such a sense is designed. As, where in this very *Epistle*, we are enjoyned *to pray for all men*, for this reason; *For* (saith St. *Paul*) *this is good and acceptable before God our Saviour, who would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge* (or acknowledgment) *of the truth*; where σωτῆρ ἡμῶν, *the Saviour of us*, seems to denote the Saviour of *us* as *men* (that interpretation best suting with the argument St. *Paul* useth) however it is expressed that God is, according to desire or intention, the Saviour of all men, in reference to their spiritual and eternal advantage; as willing that all men should embrace the Gospel; which is farther most evidently confirmed by the words immediately following; *For there is one God, and one Mediatour between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.*

1 Tim. 2. 4.

4. Because according to the tenour of Scripture, and the analogy of Christian doctrine, St. *Paul*'s assertion thus interpreted is true, as our subsequent discourse may declare.

5. I might add, that *the living God* in our *Text* may very well be understood and expounded to be our Lord *Jesus* himself; not onely as partaking of the divine nature, but as exhibited in the Gospel, the word incarnate, who as such may seem commonly by St. *Paul* to be styled, *God our Saviour*; *God manifested in the flesh*; *God, that purchased the Church with his own bloud*; *Christ, who is God over all, blessed for evermore.* However it from the premisses is sufficiently apparent, that God's being *the Saviour of all men* doth relate unto our *Saviour Jesus* his undertakings and performances for the salvation of all men; since God in a sense Evangelical is no otherwise said to save, than in concurrence with what *Jesus* did undertake and perform; than as designing, ordering, accepting, prosecuting, and accomplishing our Lord's performances; *Jesus* being the conduit through

1 Tim. 1. 1. 2. 4. 2 Tim. 1. 9. Tit. 2. 10, 13. 3. 4. 1. 3. 1 Tim. 3. 16. Acts 20. 28. Rom. 9. 5.

through which all Evangelical mercies and bleſſings are from God conveyed and diſpenſed to mankind. So that God being *the Saviour of mankind* is either directly and immediately, or by equivalence and in conſequence the ſame with *Jeſus* being *the Saviour of all men.* Ephes. 1. 3. 6

That our Lord *Jeſus* is *the Saviour of all men*; or that the moſt ſignal of his ſaving performances do in their nature and their deſign reſpect all men, as meant for, as conducing and tending to all mens ſalvation, yea and as in their own nature (ſuppoſing mens due and poſſible concurrence with them) effectually productive of their ſalvation; that I ſay this ancient *Catholick* point of doctrine (the which we profeſs to believe, when with the Church we ſay in the *Nicene Creed — Who for us men, and for our ſalvation came down from heaven*, and the which particularly our Church in its Catechiſm, in the miniſtration of Baptiſm, and in the communion doth moſt evidently and expreſly declare it ſelf to embrace) is very true, many full and clear teſtimonies of Scripture do ſhew, many reaſons grounded on Scripture do prove; the which we ſhall firſt touch, and then farther both illuſtrate and enforce the truth by declaring upon what accompts, or in what reſpects our Lord is the Saviour of all men, as alſo by an application to practice, declarative of its uſefulneſs and ſubſerviency to the purpoſes of piety. For immediate teſtimonies:

1. *Jeſus* is called the *Saviour* of the world; who was ſent and came into the world to ſave the world; whoſe chief performances were deſigned and directed to the ſalvation of the world; *We have heard and known* (ſaid the men of *Samaria*) *that this is truly the Saviour of the world, the Chriſt. We have ſeen and teſtified* (ſaith St. *John*) *that the father ſent the Son to be the Saviour of the world* (that *world*, of which it is ſaid: *He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.*) And; *God ſent his Son into the world, not to judge* (or *not to condemn*) *the world, but that the world by him ſhould be ſaved* (that *world*, whereof a great part he in effect would both judge and condemn for unbelief and diſobedience, he did come primarily upon intent to ſave.) And, *The bread which I ſhall give, is* (ſaith he) *my fleſh, which I will give for the life of the world:* And, *Behold* (ſaid the *Baptiſt*) *the Lamb of God, which taketh away the ſins of the world.* And, *God was in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their offences* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *to the world*, which otherwiſe he expreſſeth by τὰ πάντα, *by him to reconcile all things unto himſelf:*) And, *He is a propitiation not onely for our ſins, but for the ſins of the whole world,* (*the whole world*, in contradiſtinction from *all Chriſtians*, to whom St. *John* ſpeaketh in that place of his Catholick *Epiſtle*; that κόσμος ὅλος, of which he ſaith in that ſame *Epiſtle*, κόσμος ὅλος ἐν τῷ πονηρῷ κεῖται, *the whole world lieth in wickedneſs.*) In all which places that the *world* according to its ordinary acception, and as every man would take it at firſt hearing) doth ſignifie the whole community of mankind, comprehending men of all ſorts and qualities, good and bad, believers and infidels (not in a new, unuſual ſenſe, any ſpecial, reſtrained world of ſome perſons particularly regarded, or qualified) will, I ſuppoſe, eaſily appear to him, who ſhall without prejudice or partiality attend to the common uſe thereof in *Scripture*, eſpecially in St. *John* who moſt frequently applieth it as to this, ſo to other caſes, or matters.

John 4. 42. 1 John 4. 14. John 1. 10. John 3. 17. 12. 47. John 5. 22. Acts 10. 42. 17. 31. Rom. 14. 10. 2 Cor. 5. 10. John 6. 52. John 1. 29. 2 Cor. 5. 19. Coloſ. 1. 20. 1 John 2. 2. 1 John 5. 19.

2. The object of our Saviour's undertakings and intentions is deſcribed by qualities and circumſtances agreeing unto all men. All the Sons of *Adam* are by diſobedience in a loſt condition (loſt in errour and ſin, loſt in guilt and condemnation, loſt in trouble and miſery) and, *The Son of man* Matt. 18. 11.

man (saith *he* himself) *came to save,* τὸ ἀπολωλὸς, *that which was lost* (or whatever was lost.) *All men have sinned* (saith St. *Paul*) *and are fallen short of the glory of God*; and, *'Tis a faithfull saying* (saith the same *Apostle*) *and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. God commended his love to us, that we being yet sinners Christ died for us.* All men naturally are weak, and wicked; are in a state of alienation and enmity toward God; And, *Even when we were without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly: When we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son: Christ once suffered for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous.* All men have souls and lives exposed to misery and ruine: And, *The Son of man* (so he assures us) *came not to destroy, but to save the souls* (or *lives*) *of men.* Those propositions in form respecting an indefinite object, are according to vulgar use equipollent to those, wherein the object is expressed universally. However

Rom. 3. 23. 1 Tim. 1. 15. Rom. 5. 8. Eph. 2. 1, &c. Rom. 5. 6, 10. 1 Pet. 3. 18. Luke 9. 56.

3. They are interpreted by others, expressed in terms as general and comprehensive as can be; such as these Texts contain: *The living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of the faithfull* (of all men universally, not onely of the faithfull, though chiefly of them.) *God our Saviour would have all men to be saved; He is the mediatour of God and men, who gave himself a ransome for all men; God hath shut up all men under sin, that he might have mercy upon all. The love of Christ constraineth us, judging this, that if one died for all, then are all dead; and he died for all, that they who live, may not live to themselves, but to him that died for them, and rose again. The saving grace of God hath appeared to all men* (or the grace of God, which is saving to all men, hath appeared, ἐπεφάνη ἡ χάρις θεοῦ ἡ σωτήριος πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις.) *He tasted death* ὑπὲρ παντὸς, *for every man. He is the true light, that enlightneth every man coming into the world.* Which propositions do sufficiently determine the extent of our Saviour's saving performances.

1 Tim. 4. 10. 1 Tim. 2. 4, 5. Rom. 11. 32. 2 Cor. 5. 15. Tit. 2. 11. Heb. 2. 9, 10. John 1. 9.

4. Farther yet, to exclude any limitation or diminution of these so general terms (at least to exclude any limitation in regard to all the members of the visible Church, which are or have been incorporated thereinto) it is expressed, that our *Saviour's* undertakings did respect even those, who (by their own default) might lose the benefit of them, and who in effect should not be saved. For, of those false teachers, who introduced *pernicious heresies*, 'tis said, that *they denied the Lord, who bought them.* And, St. *Paul* implies, that by a scandalous example *a weak brother, for whom Christ died*, being induced to sin might be *destroyed. And by thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish for whom Christ died?* And, *Do not* (saith *he* again) *by thy eating destroy him, for whom Christ died.* And, the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* signifies concerning *Apostates*, that they do *trample upon the Son of God*, and *pollute the bloud of Christ, by which they are sanctified.*

Væ illis, qui auctorem propriæ salutis negaverunt. Ambr. Pſ. 39. 2 Pet. 2. 1. 1 Cor. 8. 11. Rom. 14. 15. Heb. 10. 29.

5. The supposition thereof is the ground of duty, and an aggravation of sin.

Thus doth the *holy Scripture* in terms very direct and expres declare this truth, indeed so clearly and fully, that scarce any other point of Christian doctrine can alledge more ample or plain testimony of Scripture for it; whence it is wonderfull that any pretending reverence to Scripture should dare (upon consequences of their own devising) to question it: and many reasons confirming the same may be deduced thence.

1. The impulsive cause, which moved God to design the sending our Lord for to undertake what he did, is expressed to be *philanthropy*; or love to mankind;

—Greg. Naz. *saith of* Julian, διὰ τοῦτο μισήσας Χριστὸν, ὅτι δι' αὐτὸν σέσωσται. Athan. *Orat.* 32.

mankind; *But* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *when the kindneſs and love of God our Saviour unto man appeared* —— *according to his mercy he ſaved us. So God loved the world, that he gave his onely begotten Son. God hereby commends his love unto us, that we as yet being ſinners, Chriſt died for us.* It was not a particular fondneſs of affection (ſuch whereof no particular ground can be aſſigned or imagined) but an univerſal (infinitely rich and abundant) goodneſs, mercy and pity toward this eminent part of his creation, ſunk into diſtreſs and lamentable wretchedneſs, which induced God to ſend his Son for the redemption of mankind.

Tit. 3. 4. Ἡ φιλανθρωπία τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Θεοῦ. John 3. 16. Rom. 5. 8. Epheſ. 2. 4.

2. God declares himſelf impartial (moſt particularly) in this caſe; that as all men in regard to him ſtand alike related, and are in the ſame condition, ſo he proceeds with indifferent affection, and upon the ſame terms with all. He is equally the Lord and Maker of all men; and all men are equally involved in guilt, and expoſed to ruine; upon which grounds St. *Paul* inferreth, that as to God's regard of man's ſalvation there is no difference between *Jews* and *Greeks*; and by parity of reaſon there can be none between any other ſorts of perſons, antecedently to God's mercifull intentions. *There is* (ſaith *he*) *no reſpect of perſons with God* (as to preparing the capacities and means, to propounding the terms and conditions of ſalvation, for about theſe he diſcourſes) for, *Is he* (ſaith the *Apoſtle*, aſſigning the reaſon of that aſſertion) *the God of the Jews, onely, and not of the Gentiles? No: There is no difference* (ſaith *he*) *of Jew and Greek, for there is the ſame Lord of all, being rich* (rich in mercy and bounty) *unto all that call upon him*; that is by conſequence ſimply unto all; for St. *Paul* implies; that God therefore provided that all men ſhould have the means of calling upon him imparted to them; for that, *how ſhould they call upon him without faith*; and *how ſhould they believe without Preachers, and how ſhould there be Preachers, if they were not ſent?* whence he infers (againſt the ſenſe of thoſe *Jews*, with whom he diſputes) that it was neceſſary that the *Apoſtles* ſhould have a commiſſion to preach unto all. And, *The righteouſneſs of God by the faith of Chriſt is manifeſted unto all, and over all that believe, for there is no difference; for all have ſinned, and come ſhort of the glory of God*; The relation of God is the ſame to all men; (he is *the God and Lord of all*) the ſtate and need of all men are the ſame; there is therefore no difference, excepting that conſequent one, which compliance or non-compliance with the conditions offered unto all doth induce. 'Tis true, in this reſpect, what the *Wiſe-man* ſaith, ὁ πάντων δεσπότης, ὁμοίως προνοεῖ περὶ πάντων· *He*, that is Lord of all, *careth* (or provideth) *for all alike*; and what *Clemens Alexand.* ſays, as to this particular, *All things lie equally for all, from God; ſo that no man can complain of him*; as partial to ſome, and deficient to others.

Rom. 2. 11. Rom. 3. 29. Rom. 10. 12. Rom. 3. 22. Sap. 6. 7.

Πᾶσι πάντα ἴσα κεῖται παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτὸς αἰτιάσασθαι. Clem. Alexand. *Strom. VII. p.* 301.

3. We may obſerve, that the undertakings and performances of *our Lord* are for nature and extent compared with thoſe of *Adam*, (who was τύπος τοῦ μέλλοντος, *a type of him that was to come*;) As *Adam*, being a repreſentative of mankind, did by his tranſgreſſion involve all men in guilt, and ſubject them to condemnation; provoked God's wrath, and drew the effects thereof upon us; brought all men under the ſlavery of ſin, and neceſſity of death; ſo was *our Lord* the *proxy* of mankind, and by his performances in our behalf did undoe for our advantage, what the former did to our prejudice; by his entire obedience expiating the common guilt, ſuſpending the fatal ſentence, pacifying God's wrath, reducing righteouſneſs, and reſtoring life to all that would embrace them; ſo doth St. *Paul*

Rom. 5. 14.

Rom. 5. 18. St. *Paul* at large (in the *5th* Chapter of his *Epistle* to the *Romans*) propound and prosecute the comparison; closing his discourse thus: *therefore as by the offence of one man upon all men to condemnation*, so by the righteousness of one upon all men to justification of life. As guilt, wrath and death forementioned were the fruits of what *Adam* did, falling upon all; so pardon, grace and life were (in design) the effects of what *our Saviour* performed, relating unto all. Yea, The same comparison St. *Paul* seems
2 Cor. 5. 15. to intimate in his 2d *Epistle* to the *Corinthians*, where he saith, that if one died for all, then are all men dead; that is, *Christ*'s dying for all men, implies all men in a state of condemnation and subjection to death; and that inference supposes the performances of the *first* and *second Adam* to be in their nature and primary effects co-extended and commensurate. The same
Rom. 3. 23. St. *Paul* seemeth in express terms to say, *All men have sinned, and are fallen short* (or *are destitute*) *of the glory of God*; *being justified freely by his grace* (or *favour*) *by the redemption that is in Christ Jesus*. (All men are justified, that is according to God's favourable intention and design.) Yea, the very reason, why God permitted sin and death to prevail so universally, is intimated to be his design of extending a capacity of righteousness and life
Rom. 11. 32. unto all; so St. *Paul* tells us: God hath shut up all men under sin, that he might have mercy upon all. And particularly, that by virtue of *Christ*'s performances death is abolished, and immortality is conferred upon all
1 Cor. 15. 22. 2 Tim. 1. 10. Rom. 6. 23. men, St. *Paul* most expressly teacheth us; *For* (saith *he*) *as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all men be made alive.*

Cùm itaque rectissimè dicatur Salvator pro totius mundi redemptione crucifixus, propter veram naturæ humanæ susceptionem, & propter communem in primo homine omnium perditionem, &c. Prosper *ad* Gall. *c.* 9.

I observe, that *Prosper* (an eager disputant about points allied to this) several times confesseth that *Christ* may be most rightly affirmed to have been crucified for the redemption of the whole world, especially upon two accompts, for his true susception of humane nature, and for the common perdition of all men in the first man; we have touched the latter, let us add, that

4. Our *Saviour* assuming our nature, and partaking of our flesh (*being made in the likeness of men, and found in fashion as a man*; yea endewed with the passions and infirmities of man's nature, exposed to the tribulations and inconveniences of man's life) did thereby allye himself, and put on a fraternal relation unto all men. *Forasmuch*, saith the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*, *as children* (the children he means of the same father, or brethren; as the tenour of his discourse makes evident) *are partakers of flesh and bloud, he also himself likewise took part of the same*; that is, gratiously designing to become a brother to the children of men, he assumed all that was proper to man's nature. *God*, saith St. *Paul*, made *the whole nation or race of men, dwelling upon the face of the earth, of one bloud*; and of that one bloud our Saviour was pleased to take part, entitling us thereby to a consanguinity with him; and it was a *Title* of his, which he seemed to affect and delight in, *the Son of man*. He being such did sanctifie our nature, by the closest conjunction thereof to the divine nature, and rendring it more than a temple of the divinity; he dignified it, and (as that *Apostle* intimateth) advanced it above the angelical nature by an alliance to God himself; he thereby not onely became qualified to mediate between God and man, and capable to transact that great business of man's salvation, but was engaged, and in a manner obliged to doe it; for as he was *a man*, he surely was endewed with the best of humane affections, universal charity

Phil. 2. 7. Heb. 4. 15. 2. 17. 5. 2. Gal. 4. 4. Heb. 2. 14, 11, 12, 16. Acts 17. 26.

Ἡ περίληψις τῆ σαρκὸς ἐκ ἐδύνατο τὸ λόγον φύσει Κύριον ὄντα, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον ἐλευθέρωσις ἦν ἡ γινομένη διὰ τὸ λόγον πάσης ἀνθρωπότητος, &c. Athan. *c.* Arr. *Orat.* 3. *p.* 385.

Heb. 2. 11. Heb. 2. 7, 16. 1 Tim. 2. 5.

rity and compassion which would excite him to promote the welfare of all; as he was *a man*, he was subject to the common law of humanity, which obliges to endeavour the common benefit of men. As he was *a brother* in relation, so he could not, he would not be otherwise in affection; he is not to be conceived deficient in performance of the offices suitable to that condition. That good-will which he requires us to bear toward all men indifferently, good and bad, friends and enemies, he questionless did bear himself in the highest degree, and to the utmost extent; the general beneficence, which in his conversation and practice he did express, doth signifie how large his desires and intentions were in regard to the welfare of men; so that we may thence well aver with St. *Ambrose*: *Incarnationis Dei mysterium est universæ salus creaturæ*; *The mystery of God's Incarnation doth respect the salvation of all mankind*, according to his desire and design.

Matt. 5. 44. Gal. 6. 10. Acts 10. 38.

Ambr. *de parad.* 8.

5. We are taught that *our Lord*, hath by his *saving* performances acquired a rightfull propriety in, and a title of dominion over all men living; to him is committed the governance and protection of all mankind, as the reward of what he did and suffered for its sake. *He is* called *the Lord of all men*; *and the head of every man.* It is said *that all things by his Father are given into his hand*, and *put under his feet*; that *power is given him over all flesh*; that *All authority is given him in heaven and earth*; *all judgment is committed to him.* Which privileges, rights, dignities are declared to have been procured by the virtue of his saving performances, and purchased by the price of his bloud. *For*, *To this end*, saith St. *Paul*, *Christ both died and rose again, and revived, that he might be the Lord both of the dead and living*; (or might exercise Lordship over both the dead and living, ἵνα καὶ νεκρῶν καὶ ζώντων κυριεύσῃ) and, *We are not our own* (saith *he* again) *we are bought with a price:* And, *we see Jesus, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour, that by the grace of God he might taste death for every man*, (or, for the suffering of death, that by God's grace he might taste death for every man, crowned with glory and honour; for there seems to be such a trajection in the words;) And *he was obedient unto death, even to the death of the cross*; *therefore hath God exalted him, and given him a name above every name.* Subjection then and redemption as they have one ground, so they are implied to have the same extent; as every one must call *Christ Lord*, so he may call him *Saviour*; therefore his *Lord*, because his *Saviour.* And since *Christ* hath got an authority over all men, a propriety in every man; since he hath undertaken to govern and protect the world, he questionless as a Prince of incomparable benignity and clemency doth seriously intend and desire the best welfare of all his people; it surely cannot be a small benefit to the community of men, that they are his subjects; the objects of his Princely care, and of his mercy. -----κήδεται τῶν συμπάντων· ἕπεται καὶ καθήκει καὶ κυρίῳ πάντων γενομένῳ· σωτὴρ γὰρ ὄντι, οὐχὶ τῶν μέν, τῶν δ' οὔ. *He taketh care of all which doth become him that is Lord of all*; *for that he is indifferently the Saviour of all*, saith *Clem. Alex.*

Ἄνθρωπον αὐτὸν ποιήσας ὁ πατὴρ οὐχ ἁπλῶς ἐποίησεν ἄνθρωπον, ἀλλ' εἰς τὸ κυριεῦσαι πάντων αὐτόν, καὶ ἁγιάζειν πάντας διὰ τῆς χρίσματος πεποίηκεν. Ath. *Orat.* 3. *in* Art. *p.* 385.

Apoc. 17. 14. Acts 10. 36.
1 Cor. 11. 3. Matt. 28. 18.
Matt. 11. 27.
John 3. 35. 13. 3.
Heb. 2. 8. 1. 2.
John 17. 2. 5. 22.
Phil. 2. 9. Psal. 110. 7.

Rom. 14. 9.

1 Cor. 6. 20.

Heb. 2. 9.

Phil. 2. 8, 9. Apoc. 5. 9. 12.

Clem. *Strom.* 7. *p.* 505.

6. We are commanded to *pray*, *intercede* and *give thanks* (indifferently) *for all men*, even for Heathens and Persecutours; as for the objects of God's benevolent affection; whom *he would have to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of his truth*; expressing our charity in conformity to the

1 Tim. 2. 1, 4.

Μιμῶ τὸ θεῖ ---- εἰ πάντας θέλει σωθῆναι, ἐκόπως ὑπὲρ πάντων δεῖ εὔχεσθαι, εἰ πάντας αὐτὸς ἠθέλησε σωθῆναι, θέλε κὰ σύ· εἰ δὲ θέλεις, εὔχε. Chrys.

unconfined goodneſs of God. Very good reaſon (argues St. *Chryſoſtome*) there is why we ſhould pray for all men; for if God doth will the ſalvation of all men, we in imitation of him, ſhould will the ſame; and if we deſire it, we ſhould pray for it. Upon which ſcore the *Catholick Church* hath conſtantly and carefully obſerved this precept; ſo the learned Writer *de vocatione Gentium* aſſures us: *Which law of ſupplication*, ſaith he, *the devotion of all prieſts, and all the faithfull people doth ſo obſerve, that there is no part of the world, in which ſuch prayers are not ſolemnized by the Chriſtian people. The Church of God doth therefore ſupplicate not onely for the Saints, and the regenerate in Chriſt, but alſo for all infidels, and enemies of the Croſs of Chriſt; for all Idolatours, all Perſecutours, all Jews, Hereticks and Schiſmaticks.* And *Proſper* himſelf: *Setting aſide*, ſaith *he, that diſtinction, which the divine knowledge contains within the ſecret of his juſtice, it is moſt ſincerely to be believed and profeſſed, that God wills that all men ſhall be ſaved; ſince the Apoſtle, whoſe ſentence that is, doth moſt ſolicitouſly injoin, that which is in all the Churches moſt piouſly obſerved, that God ſhould be implored for all men.* So doth *he* atteſt the common practice, and declare the ground thereof.

Quam legem ſupplicationis, ità omnium ſacerdotum, & omnium fidelium devotio, concorditur tenet, ut nulla pars mundi ſit, in qua hujuſmodi orationes non celebrentur à populis Chriſtianis. Supplicat ergò ubique Eccleſia Dei non ſolùm pro Sanctis & in Chriſto jam regeneratis, ſed etiam pro omnibus infidelibus, & inimicis crucis Chriſti, &c.

Remotâ ergò diſcretione, quam divina ſcientia intra ſecretum juſtitiæ ſuæ continet, ſinceriſſimè credendum atque profitendum eſt Deum velle, ut omnes homines ſalvi fiant; ſiquidem Apoſtolus, cujus iſta ſententia eſt, ſolicitiſſimè præcipit quod in omnibus Eccleſiis piiſſimè cuſtoditur, ut Deo pro omnibus hominibus ſupplicetur. Proſ. *ad obj. Vincent.* 2.

7. For which practice, and for the confirmation of its ground (God's ſerious willingneſs and deſire that men ſhould be ſaved) we have the pattern of our *Lord* himſelf, praying to his *Father* for the pardon of the worſt of men, his murtherers; which as it demonſtrated his charity toward them, ſo it argues that he was their *Saviour*, for that otherwiſe he knew they could not be in any capacity of having pardon. His praying for them implies the poſſibility of their receiving forgiveneſs; and ſuch a poſſibility doth preſuppoſe a diſpoſition in God to grant it, and conſequently a ſatisfaction provided, ſuch as God requires and accepts, and which ſhall avail to their benefit, if toward the application thereof they perform their parts.

8. Indeed it is not eaſie to conceive how we can heartily pray for pardon, or for any other bleſſing either for our ſelves or for others, without ſuppoſing *Chriſt* to be *our* Saviour and *theirs*; without ſuppoſing God placable and well affected towards us and them in *Chriſt*, upon the accompt of his performances and ſufferings in our and their behalf. We are to offer up all our devotions in the name of *Chriſt*, and for his ſake muſt implore all mercies and bleſſings from God, which how can we doe ſeriouſly and with faith, if we may reaſonably queſtion whether *Chriſt*'s merits do reſpect us, and conſequently whether they can be available in our behalf? I will, ſaith St. *Paul*, that men ſhould pray in every place, lifting up pure hands without wrath or doubting; which precept how can any man obſerve; how can any man pray with calmneſs and confidence of mind, who is not aſſured that *Chriſt* is his Saviour, or that God for *Chriſt*'s ſake is diſpoſed to grant his requeſts? but this point we may be obliged to proſecute ſomewhat farther in the application.

1 Tim. 2. 8.

9. Either our Saviour's performances do reſpect all men, or ſome men (the far greateſt part of men) do ſtand upon no other terms, than thoſe of the firſt creation, or rather of the ſubſequent lapſe and condemnation;

nation; being subject to an extremely rigorous law, and an infallibly certain guilt; and consequently to inevitable punishment; being utterly secluded from all capacity of mercy, and having no place of repentance left unto them (the place of repentance being a most signal part of *Christ*'s purchase) so that if any such man should, according to the proportion of his light and ability, perform what is agreeable to God's law, doing what is possible to him (this may be supposed, for what is possible to a man he may doe, what is possible is possible) in order to his salvation, he notwithstanding should be incapable of any mercy, favour or acceptance. But, beside that it is expressly said, that *God* did *shut up all men under sin, that he might have mercy upon all*; and that we are plainly enough informed, that our Lord did reverse the first fatal sentence, and hath as the mediatour between God and man evacuated all former covenants by establishing a new one (for if any former *covenant had been good, there had been no place sought for a new one*, as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* discourseth) besides these considerations, I say, and beside that such suppositions do not well sute to the nature of God, and do not well consist with the tenour of his providence; God positively and vehemently disclaimeth this rigour of proceding; he both under *Law* and *Gospel* declares himself ready to admit any man's repentance; yea earnestly invites all men thereto; yea grievously explains and expostulates with men for not repenting, yea not only says it, but swears it by his own life, that he desires any wicked man should doe it; He strongly asserts, he earnestly inculcates, he loudly proclaims to all his readiness to pardon, and his delight in shewing mercy; the riches of his goodness and forbearance, and long-suffering. He declares, that he will exact an accompt of men, according to proportion, answerable to their willingness to doe what they could; and to the improvements of those talents (those measures of light and strength) which they had, or might have had; that whoever is ἐν ἐλαχίστῳ πιστὸς, faithfull in using the smallest power, shall be accepted and rewarded. He represents himself impartial in his judgment and acceptance of mens persons and performances; any man, in any nation, his sincere, though imperfect, piety and righteousness being acceptable to him; The final ruine of men is not imputed to any antecedent defect lying in man's state, or God's will, to no obstacle on God's part, nor incapacity on the part of man, but wholly to man's blameable neglect, or wilfull abuse of the means conducible to his salvation: No want of mercy in God, or virtue in the passion of our Lord are to be mentioned or thought of; infidelity (formal or interpretative) and obstinate impenitency disappointing God's mercifull intentions, and frustrating our Lord's saving performances, and endeavours, are the sole banes of mankind; *Here* (saith our *Lord*) *is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.* And, *I speak these things, that ye might be saved; but ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.* And, *How often have I willed to gather thy children, as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, but ye would not?* Of the *Pharisees* and *Lawyers* our *Saviour* said, that *they defeated the counsel of God toward themselves* (ἠθέτησαν τὴν βουλὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ εἰς ἑαυτούς) the counsel of God, who designed to bring them to repentance by the instruction and exhortation of St. *John* the *Baptist*. Our *Saviour* invited many to the participation of the *Gospel* (*that great Feast of fat things to all people*, as the Prophet *Esay* calleth it) but they would not come, saith the Text; he

Acts 5. 31. Luke 24. 47. Rom. 11. 32. Heb. 8. 7. Acts 17. 30. Ezek. 18. Ezek. 33. 11. Isa. 55. 3. 7. Mic. 7. 8. Rom. 2. 4. 2 Cor. 8. 12. Matt. 25. 25. Luke 19. 17. 16. 10. Acts 10. 34. 1 Pet. 1. 17. John 3. 19. John 5. 34. 40. Matt. 23. 17. Luke 7. 30. Isa. 25. 6. Matt. 22. 3, 5.

he iterated his meſſage, but they careleſly neglecting it (ἀμελήσαντες) *went away, one to his farm, another to his merchandize, and the reſt took his*
Matt. 13. 19, 38. *ſervants, and intreated them ſpitefully, and ſlew them.* The *Sower* (our *Lord*) did ſow in the *field* (*the world*) the good ſeed of heavenly truth, but ſome would not admit into their heads or hearts; from others temptation bare it away; in others worldly cares and deſires choaked it;
John 7. 46. 15. 22. 15. 24. 9. 32. Our *Lord* ſpake the moſt convincing words, ſuch as no man ever ſpake, ſuch as drew *Publicans* and *Harlots* into the Kingdom of heaven; he
Matt. 21. 31. John 7. 31. performed moſt aſtoniſhing works, ſuch as never the like were done, which were ſufficient to convert *Tyre* and *Sidon*, yea to have preſerved
John 5. 44. 12. 43. *Sodom*, but without effect, ſuch were the invincible obſtinacy, the groſs
Luke 16. 14. ſtupidity, the corrupt prejudices, and perverſe affections of his auditours
Matt. 13. 13. 23. 14. and ſpectatours, upon which cauſes our *Lord* chargeth the inefficacy and
Acts 7. 51. unſucceſsfulneſs of his endeavours for their ſalvation. So doth St. *Ste-*
Acts 28. 26. *phen* call the *Jews*, unto whom the *Goſpel* was offered, *hard-necked, uncircumciſed in heart and ears*; ſuch as *did always reſiſt the holy Spirit.* St. *Paul* gives the ſame character of them, and aſſigns the ſame cauſe of
Acts 13. 46. their rejecting the *Goſpel.* And of the *Jews* of *Antioch* 'tis ſaid, that they did *thruſt away the word of ſalvation, judging themſelves unworthy of everlaſting life* (that is, diſdaining to embrace the overture of everla-
Rom. 2. 3. ſting life made unto them.) And, *deſpiſeſt thou the riches of God's goodneſs, and forbearance, and long-ſuffering, being ignorant, that the goodneſs of God leadeth thee to repentance?* ſo St. *Paul* expoſtulates with the incredu-
Heb. 2. 3. lous *Jew.* And, *How*, ſaith the *Apoſtle* to the *Hebrews*, *ſhall we eſcape, if we neglect ſo great ſalvation?* ſo do our *Lord* and his *Apoſtles* ſtate the reaſon of mens miſcarrying in this great affair; ſignifying all requiſite care and proviſion to be made on God's part for their ſalvation; and imputing the obſtruction ſolely to their voluntary default of compliance with God in his conduct and management thereof.

Neither are the dealings and declarations of God toward thoſe who lived under the *Law* and *Prophets*, impertinent to this purpoſe; they are applicable upon conſideration of parity in reaſon, or likeneſs in caſe.

What remonſtrances concerning the gentleneſs, kindneſs, and equity of his dealings, what exprobrations of their ſtubbornneſs and ſtupidity God did anciently make to *Iſrael* under that particular diſpenſation, (which yet in tendency and in repreſentation may be deemed general) the ſame he might now uſe toward all mankind, under this *univerſal æco-*
Pſal. 2. 8. *nomy*, wherein God hath given to his *Son*, *the heathen for his inheritance,*
Apoc. 11. 15. *and the utmoſt parts of the earth for his poſſeſſion*; whereby *all the Kingdoms of the world are become the Kingdoms of the Lord, and his Chriſt*; which hath erected an unconfined Kingdom of grace; to which all men in deſign and of right are ſubject; in reſpect to which every nation is
Iſa. 5. 4. in obligation and duty become the people of God. *What* (ſaid *God* to them) *could I have done more to my Vineyard than I have done,*
Hoſ. 13. 9. *wherefore when I looked for grapes did it bring forth wild grapes! O If-*
Iſa. 65. 2. *rael, thou haſt deſtroyed thy ſelf, but in me is thy help. I have ſpread out*
Rom. 10. 21. *my hands all the day-long to a rebellious and gainſaying people. I ſpake*
Jer. 7. 31. *unto you riſing up early and ſpeaking, but ye heard not; I called, but ye*
Prov. 1. 24, 29. *anſwered not; I have called, and ye have refuſed; I have ſtretched out my*
Iſa. 65. 12. 66. 4. 1. 18. *hand, and no man regarded. But ye have ſet at nought all my counſel,*
Ezek. 12. 2. *and would none of my reproof. When I called, ye did not anſwer; when I ſpake, ye did not hear; but did evil before mine eyes, and did chuſe that,*
Jer. 6. 10. *wherein I delighted not.* And, *Behold their ear is uncircumciſed, and they*

they cannot hearken; behold the word of the Lord is unto them a reproach, they have no delight in it. They refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear; yea they made Zech. 7. 11, 12. *their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the Law, which the Lord of hosts hath sent in his Spirit.* Which passages, with many others of the like importance that occur, do imply the large extent of God's mercifull intentions; and the competency of the means, which God affords for the salvation of men; that he wants no affection or inclination to save them, that he neglects no means proper for effecting it; that he draws them into the way leading thither by serious and earnest invitation, directs them by needfull light and instruction, excites them by powerfull arguments and persuasions; And, as St. *Ambrose* speaketh, *Quod in Deo* De parad. 8. *fuit, ostendit omnibus, quod omnes voluit liberare: God shewed to all, that what was in him, he did will to deliver* (or save) *all men.* Whence he may truly and properly be called the Benefactour and *Saviour*, even of those, who by their wilfull malice or neglect do not obtain salvation. For in respect to the same favours, which are exhibited and tendred to them, He is the Saviour of those, who by hearkning to God's call, and complying with God's design; by well using the means vouchsafed, and performing the conditions required, do finally attain salvation.

——ἀπολογέμβρ⊙ μετὰ ὑποδιξεως ὅτι πάντα τὰ εἰς αὐτὸν ἥκοντα ὅλη σωτηρία ἦν κειμοδρων πεπίηκεν——(Bas. *in* Ps. 7.)

If it be said, that these transactions do refer onely to God's own people, or to those onely, unto whom God pleased to dispence especial revelations of truth and overtures of mercy; that we therefore cannot thence infer any thing concerning the general extent of God's design, or the virtue of *Christ*'s performances in respect to all mankind; we may to this suggestion rejoin, that by observing the manner of God's proceedings toward them, unto whom he openly declareth his mind and will, we may reasonably collect how he standeth affected toward others, and by what rules, or upon what accompts he dealeth with them; taking in the analogy of reason, and parity or disparity of the case. As to God's affection, it is the same every-where, agreeable to that nature, which inclineth him to be *good to all*, and *mercifull over all his creatures* (as Psal. 145. 9. the *Psalmist* tells us) unto which disposition his providence yields attestation; for οὐκ ἀμάρτυρον ἑαυτὸν ἀφῆκεν ἀγαθοποιῶν, *he did not leave* Acts 14. 17. *himself without testimony, doing good to all*, as St. *Paul* tells us; although he doth not dispense his favours in the same method, or discover his meaning by the same light, or call all men to him with the same voice and language.

Neither was mankind ever left destitute of that *divine grace*, which (as the good *Writer*, *de vocatione Gentium* saith) *never denied it self to any ages, with the same virtue, in different measure, with an unchangeable counsel, and multiform operation.* So in one place; and in another, *There was always* (saith *he*) *dispensed to all men a certain measure of instruction from above, which although it came from a more occult and sparing grace, did yet suffice to some for remedy, to all for testimony.*

Gratia Dei nullis seculis se negavit, virtute unâ, quantitate diversâ, concilio incommutabili, opere multiformi. II. 5.

Adhibita est semper universis hominibus quædam supernæ mensura doctrinæ, quæ etsi occultioris parciorisque gratiæ fuit, sufficit tamen quibusdam ad remedium, omnibus ad testimonium. II. 15.

Comparing the different states of men, we may substitute with St. *Paul*, for the *law of revelation* engraved upon *tables*, the *law of nature* written in mens *hearts*; for *prophetical instructions* the *dictates*

Rom. 2. 14, 15.

—— *nulli nationi hominum bonitatis suæ, dona subtraxit, ut propheticas voces & præcepta legalia convincerentur in elementorum obsequiis, & testimoniis accepisse. De Voc. G. I. 5.* Rom. 1. 19.

of

of reason; for *audible* admonitions and reproofs, *secret* whispers of grace, and checks of conscience; for *extraordinary* instances of divine power,
Acts 14. 17. the *ordinary* works of the creation (*by which God's eternal divinity and power are discernible*) for the *special* and occasional influences of providence, the *common* and continual expressions of divine beneficence; then allowing for the disparity (as to measure of evidence and efficacy) in these things; and as to the rest, the case is the same. If one part hath means more clear and forcible, yet those which are granted to the other
Acts 17. 27. are not void of use or virtue; by them all men in all places *may seek God,*
Rom. 1.18,20. *if haply they may feel him and find him*; yea may (as St. *Paul* implieth)
Rom. 2.15,26. be able to know God, and induced to serve him; to thank him and to
Rom. 1. 21. glorifie him in some measure; in a measure answerable to such light and strength; no more doth God require, for no more will he reckon with them. If their helps be deemed more low and scanty, their duty in proportion is less high, and their accompt will be more easie. Enough
Rom. 1. 20. certainly they have to excuse God from misprision of not having provided competently for them, to render them, if they do not well use and improve it, inexcusable; and what they have is an effect of God's mercy procured and purchased by their Saviour. But of this *Point* we may have occasion afterward to say more; I shall now onely add; that this suggestion, well considered, may afford another argument to confirm our doctrine; which is this:

10. If *our Lord* be the *Saviour* of all those to whom God's truth is declared; and his mercy offered; or, if he be the *Saviour* of all the members of the visible Church; particularly if he be the *Saviour* of those, who among these, rejecting the overtures and means of grace, or by disobedience abusing them, shall in the event fail of being saved, then is he the *Saviour* of all men. But *Our Lord* is the *Saviour* of those persons; and therefore he is *the Saviour of all men.* The *assumption* we assayed to shew in the last argument; and many expres testimonies of *Scripture* before-mentioned establish it; the common style of Scripture doth imply it, when in the *Apostolical* Writings to all the visibly faithfull indifferently the relation to *Christ* as their Saviour is assigned, an interest in all his saving performances is supposed, the title of σωζόμενοι and σεσωσμένοι (with others equivalent, of *justified, sanctified, regenerated, quickned*, &c.) are attributed. And in our Text God is said to be *the Saviour* chiefly τῶν πιστῶν, *of the faithfull*; which word in its common acception denotes all visible members of the Christian communion. And for its confirmation we adjoin: The *Apostles* at first, and the *Church* ever since after them (except some heterodox people of late) have professed readily to confer holy *Baptism*, and therein to dispense remission of sins, together with other Evangelical graces and privileges, to every man professing his faith in *Christ*, and resolution to observe *Christ*'s law, upon this supposition, that *Christ* is the *Saviour* of all such persons, and by his salutary passion hath purchased that remission for them; although the dispensers of these graces could not discern what decrees God in his secret providence had passed upon them, or what the event should be as to their final state; yea although according to the judgment of prudence they could not but conceive, that all such should not be saved, but that
Heb. 10. 39. many of them should be of those, who (as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*
2 Pet. 1. 9. speaketh) would *draw back unto perdition*, who (as St. *Peter* implies some might and would do) would forget the purgation, which they had received of their sins. That in thus doing the Church proceeds upon

on a perſuaſion that *Chriſt* is truly the Saviour of all its viſible members, duly admitted and incorporated thereinto, the thing it ſelf plainly ſignifies; the tenour of its practice makes palpable; the forms of ſpeech uſed in its holy adminiſtrations (of prayers, of ſacraments, of exhortations) do ſuppoſe, or expreſs. For how can each member ſingly be aſſerted in holy Baptiſm to be waſhed from his ſins, and ſanctified to God, and made regenerate or adopted into the number of God's children, and made partaker of *Chriſt*'s death? how can thankſgiving in the common name, in moſt general terms, be offered up for *Chriſt*'s ſaving performances? or the holy bread and cup be imparted to each communicant as ſymbols and pledges of *Chriſt*'s charity and mercy toward him? how can every Chriſtian be inſtigated to obedience in gratitude to *Chriſt*, and thoſe who tranſgreſs *Chriſt*'s laws, upbraided for their ingratitude toward him; their rejecting, or renouncing, deſpiſing, or abuſing him and his ſalvation? how can ſuch things be ſaid and done with any truth or conſiſtency; yea without forgery and mockery, if every baptized Chriſtian hath not an intereſt in our Lord's performances; if *Chriſt* be the Saviour onely of an uncertain and unknown part in the Church? This conſideration of the Churches practice hath made even the moſt vehement aſſertours of St. *Auſtin*'s doctrine (ſtrained to the higheſt pitch) in the more ancient and modeſt times, fully to acknowledge this poſition; that *Chriſt* is the redeemer of every member of the viſible Church, as appears by this remarkable decree of the Council of *Valentia* in *France* (conſiſting of the Biſhops of three Provinces, favourers of *Godſcalous* his opinions.) *We alſo do believe it moſt firmly to be held, that all the multitude of the faithfull, being regenerated by water and the Holy Spirit, and hereby truly incorporated into the Church, and according to the Apoſtolical doctrine baptized into the death of Chriſt, is by his bloud waſhed from their ſins.* Becauſe there could be no true regeneration, unleſs there were made alſo a true redemption; ſince in the Sacraments of the Church there is nothing empty (or vain) nothing ludificatory; but all thoroughly true, and ſupported by its own very truth and ſincerity. Yet that out of the very company of believers and the redeemed, ſome are eternally ſaved, becauſe by God's grace they faithfully abide in their redemption, bearing the Lord's ſpeech in their hearts, *He that perſeveres to the end ſhall be ſaved*; and that others, becauſe they would not abide in the ſalvation of the faith, which they at firſt received, and did rather chuſe to fruſtrate the grace of redemption by evil doctrine or life, than to keep it, do no-wiſe arrive to the plenitude of ſalvation, and to the perception of eternal beatitude. 'Tis then a Chatholick and true doctrine, that at leaſt *Chriſt* is a Saviour of all appearing Chriſtians; and ſuppoſing the truth thereof, I ſay that by conſequence he is alſo the Saviour of all men. For it appeareth thence, that the deſign of our Saviour's performances did not flow from, or was not grounded upon any ſpecial love, or any abſolute decree concerning thoſe perſons, who in event ſhall be ſaved; ſince according to that ſuppoſition it extendeth to many others; wherefore it proceeded from God's natural goodneſs and common kind affection toward mankind; from the compaſſion of a gratious Creatour toward his miſerable creature, whence all men are concerned and intereſted therein. Why God's mercifull intentions were not explicitly declared and propounded to *Socrates* and *Epicletus*, as they were to *Judas Iſcariot* and *Simon Magus*, is another queſtion, which we may afterward in ſome manner aſſoil; at preſent, it ſuffices to ſay, that

Anno 855. *Item firmiſſimè tenendum credimus, &c. ſuprà.*

that the overture of mercy made to ſuch wretches doth argue God's kind diſpoſition and good intention toward all men; ſo it did in St. *Ambroſe* his opinion; who ſays, that our Lord ought not to paſs by the man who ſhould betray him, that all men might take notice, that in the choice even of his traytour, he did hold forth a pledge or mark of all mens being to be ſaved.

Et ideò nec proditurum debuit prætorire ut adverterent omnes, quod in electione etiam proditoris ſui ſervandorum omnium inſigne prætendit. Ambr. *de parad.* 8.

But the truth of this doctrine will farther appear by the declaration and ſurveyal of thoſe reſpects according to which *Chriſt* is repreſented the Saviour of men, as alſo by conſidering how uſefull and conducible to piety this doctrine is, as miniſtring grounds and obligations, encouragements and motives to the practice of moſt conſiderable duties required from all men. But theſe things muſt be reſerved to another occaſion.

SER-

Sermon XL.

THE DOCTRINE OF Universal Redemption ASSERTED and EXPLAIN'D.

1 TIM. IV. 10.

—The living God; who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.

THAT our Lord *Jesus* is the Saviour of all men, we have before from plain testimonies of holy *Scripture*, and from some arguments grounded there, assayed to shew. The same will be made farther apparent by considering the respects according to which he is such; and those we may first consider generally and in the gross, then survey them more particularly and distinctly.

In general we may say, that our Lord is the Saviour of all men, for that he hath rendred all men *salvabiles*, capable of salvation; and *salvandos*, designed to salvation. For that he hath removed all obstacles peremptorily debarring men from access to salvation, and hath procured competent furtherances to their attainment of it. For that he hath rescued mankind out of that dead and desperate condition, wherein it lay involved; being *the bread of God*, who *hath descended from heaven, that he might give life to the world*, as he saith of himself. For that he hath performed whatever on his part is necessary or fit in order to salvation, antecedently to the acceptance and compliance with those reasonable conditions, which by God's wisedom are required toward the instating men into a full and immediate right to salvation, or to a complete and actual fruition thereof. He made the way to happiness plain and passable: levelling the insuperable cliffs, and filling up the *chasmes*, and rectifying the obliquities, and smoothing the asperities thereof, as the *Prophet* foretold; so that all men, who would, might conveniently walk therein. He set the doors of *Paradise* wide open, so that who pleased might enter in; all the bonds and restraints under which men lay, he so far loosed, that any man might be free, who would con-

John 6. 33.

Luke 3. 5.

Ἡ γῆ ἀντὶ κατάρας εὐλόγηται, ὁ παράδεισος ἀνοίγη, &c. Athan. *in pass.*

Luke 4. 18. Ἀπέσταλκε ἄνεσιν——

cur to his own liberty and enlargement. All the protection, aid and encouragement which was needfull toward obtaining salvation, he afforded and exhibited to every one, that would embrace and make use of them. In respect to which performances he might be justly esteemed and truly called a *Saviour*, although all men do not in effect become saved. For the estimation and denomination of performances are to be grounded upon their own nature and design, not upon events depending upon the contingent and arbitrary behaviour of men. As he that freely offers a rich boon is no less to be accompted a benefactour and liberal, although his gift be refused, than if it were accepted; as he that opens the prison is to be styled a deliverer, although the captive will not go forth; as he that ministers an effectual remedy, although the patient will not use it, deserves the honour and thanks due to a Physician; so is *our Lord* in regard to what he hath performed for men, and offered to them (being sufficient to prevent their misery, and promote their happiness) to be worthily deemed, and thankfully acknowledged their *Saviour*, although not all men, yea although not one man should receive the designed benefit. Accordingly we may observe, that in the Scripture style, those persons are said to be saved, who are onely in a way toward salvation, although they do not arrive thither; and the means conducing to salvation are said to save, although their effect may be defeated; σωζόμενοι and σεσωσμένοι are terms applied to all Christians, and *Christ* is ὁ σώσας, *he that hath saved them*; and *Faith* is said to have *saved them*, although some of them εἰκῆ ἐπίστευσαν, have *believed in vain*, or to no effect, forsaking and renouncing their faith; and *Baptism* saves them, who partake it, although being washed, they return to their wallowing in the mire. And as our *Lord* is so termed a *Saviour* in respect to them, who are by faith and admission into the Church put into a more near capacity of salvation, as St. *Paul* speaketh: ἐγγύτερον ἡμῶν ἡ σωτηρία, ἢ ὅτε ἐπιστεύσαμεν (*Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed*;) so is he in respect of all those, who are in any capacity thereof, although a more remote one.

Acts 16. 17. Καταγγέλλουσιν ὁδὸν σωτηρίας——
1 Cor. 1. 18. Acts 2. 47. Apoc. 21. 29. Eph. 2. 5. 2 Tim. 1. 9. 1 Cor. 15. 2. Tit. 3. 8. 1 Pet. 3. 21. 2 Pet. 2. 22.
Rom. 13. 11.

But let us now view more nearly and distinctly the respects in which he is *a Saviour of all men*, or the particular benefits and advantages conducing to salvation, which by his performances accrue to mankind; for πάμπολυ τιὼ σωτηρίαν ἁπάσῃ χαρίζεται τῇ ἀνθρωπότητι, *In very many ways he bestoweth salvation upon all mankind*, as *Clemens Alexandrinus* speaks.

Clem. Alex. *Pædag.* 11.

1. Our *Lord* is *the Saviour of all men*, as having effected that Almighty God (who upon great provocations was justly displeased and angry with man, who had averted his face, and withdrawn his favour from mankind, whom our apostasie and rebellion had rendred a stranger and an enemy to us) hath deposed his wrath toward mankind, hath conceived a kind affection to it, doth cast a favourable aspect upon it; being thoroughly reconciled and made a friend thereto by our Saviour's mediation. *This is my beloved Son, ἐν ᾧ εὐδόκησα, in whom I have been well pleased*, was the attestation given from God to our Lord; the meaning whereof in regard to men the holy choire of Angels did interpret, when after the gladsome report of his birth (that *great joy, which should be to all people*) they sang, *Glory be to God on high, on earth peace, good-will toward men.* Which St. *Paul* farther declareth, when he saith, that by him εὐδόκησε, God pleased to reconcile unto himself all things, upon earth, and in heaven; and when he saith, *That God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their sins.* And, *When we were enemies* (saith he again) *we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son:*

Matt. 3. 17. 12. 18.
Luke 2. 10, 14.
Col. 1. 20. Eph. 1. 10. 2 Cor. 5. 29. Rom. 5.

When

When we were enemies, that implies God antecedently to any man's conversion to have been appeased, and become favourably disposed toward all men, or toward those, whom St. *Paul* speaketh unto, as men; so the reason of the case doth import, and so the analogy which St. *Paul* immediately after propounds between the results of *Adam*'s transgression and our *Saviour*'s obedience (as to provocation and reconciliation, to condemnation and absolution, to the intents of bringing death and life upon all men) doth enforce. Whence it is, that God declareth himself now to bear an universal good-will to mankind, that he doth earnestly desire the welfare of all men, and is displeased with the ruine of any man; that he *would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth*, becaus̃e *there is one mediatour between God and man*; *that he would not have any perish, but that all should come to repentance*; this he affirms, yea (for the confirmation of our faith and our consolation therein) he in the *Evangelical Prophet* swears it, *As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live.* So far toward our salvation is done, God meets us half way; he is reconciled unto us, it remains onely that we be reconciled to him; that we hearken to the Embassie from him: *Be reconciled to God.*

1 Tim. 2. 4. 2 Pet. 3. 9. Heb. 6. 16, 18. Ezek. 33. 11. 2 Cor. 5.

2. *Jesus* is *the Saviour of all men*, by satisfying the divine justice, and repairing God's honour in their behalf. The disloyal and ingratefull behaviour of man had so wronged, so endamaged, so dishonoured God (had so abused the goodness, disparaged the wisedom, slighted the power, impeached and slurr'd the authority of his Creatour, had so prejudiced all the rights and interests of God) that by the divine wisedom it was thought fit, that he should not be restored into a capacity of mercy and favour, without a signal compensation made, and an exemplary punishment undergone, whereby the right of God should conspicuously be asserted, his love of goodness and dislike of wickedness should be remarkably demonstrated, and every creature in heaven and earth should be solemnly admonished of its duty; of the reverence and obedience it owes to the great Creatour, of the heinous guilt and horrible mischief it incurs by offending him. Such a compensation man was no-wise able to make, or fit to undergoe such a punishment: Our *Saviour* therefore, out of infinite pity and charity, did undertake both; by a voluntary condescension puting himself into the low and weak state of man; subjecting himself unto that Law which man was obliged unto, and suffering the pains which man had deserved. This he was pleased to do in man's behalf, and in our stead; and God was pleased to accept it as so done. His incarnation (or exinanition of himself, as St. *Paul* calleth it) was an act of that high duty and goodness, that it in virtue surpassed all the obedience, which all creatures were able to render; that it yielded God more satisfaction and more honour than the joint endeavours of all the world could confer. His with so intense charity and chearfulness fulfilling all righteousness did far more please God, than all our most exact obedience could have done; his enduring bitter pains and disgraces (considering the infinite dignity of his person, his near relation and dearness to God, his perfect innocence and rectitude, yea his immense charity, contentedness and patience) more than countervailed the punishment due to the sins of

Λοιπὸν γὰρ οἱ ἄνθρωποι ἐκεῖνο κατ' ἀρχὰς ἔπαθον, ἀμαρτωλοὶ καὶ νεκροί· ἀλλὰ κατὰ τοῦτο τῷ λόγῳ δύναμιν ἀνασώζεις ἀθάνατοι καὶ ἄφθαρτοι ἀεὶ διαμένουσιν. Athan. *in* Arian. Orat. 4. 485.

Τότε γὰρ καὶ θάνατος, καὶ κατάρα ἐλύετο, καὶ δαίμονες κατεφρονοῦντο καὶ ἐδογματίζοντο θεραπευόμενοι, καὶ τὸ χειρόγραφον τῆς ἁμαρτίας τῷ σταυρῷ προσηλώθη, &c. Chrys. *in* John 1. 14. Phil. 2. 7.

Ἡ ἔνσαρκος παρουσία τοῦ σωτῆρος θανάτου λύτρον καὶ λύσεως πάσης σύλληψις γέγονεν. Athan. *ad Adelph. Ep.*

Vide Cyrill. *in Eph. Conc. p.* 133. Δικαιώσας τὸν ἄνθρωπον φύσιν, &c.

all men. Such a payment was more than ſerved to diſcharge all our debts, (it ſerv'd to purchaſe an *overplus* of graces and bleſſings) ſo rich a price
Eph. 5. 2. Heb. 10. 10. 9. 12. 1 Pet. 1. 19. was more than ſufficient to ranſome all the world from captivity; ſo goodly, ſo pure, ſo ſweet, ſo pretious a Sacrifice might worthily expiate and attone all the guilts of men.

Aug. *in* Pſal. 95. Μὴ θαυμάζῃς εἰ κόσμῳ ὅλῳ ἐλυτρώθη· ἄξιος γὰρ ἦν ἄνθρωπος ὅλος, ἀλλ' εἷς θεὸς μονογενὴς, ὁ ὑπὲρ ἀποθνήσκων, &c. Cyrill. *Cat.* 13.

Now if we enquire what our Saviour did redeem, the conſideration of what he paid may (as St. *Auſtin* tells) help to inform us; *Quæritis quid emerit? videte quid dederit, & invenite quid emerit. Do ye ſee* (ſaith he) *what he bought? ſee what he gave, and find what he bought.* However, that as the value and ſufficiency of our Lord's performances, ſo the deſign and effect thereof did reach ſo far in regard to man; that his charity was no leſs extenſive than his performance was com-
John 1. 29. plete, for our good, the holy *Scripture* teaches us. For, *He is the lamb of*
6. 51. *God that taketh away the ſins of the world,* (ſaith the *Baptiſt.*) And, *The bread* (ſaith *he*) *which I gave is my fleſh, which I will give for the life of the*
1 John 2. 2. *world.* And, *He is a propitiation* (ſaith St. *John*) *for our ſins; and not one-*
1 Tim. 2. 5. *ly for our ſins, but for the ſins of the whole world.* And, *He is the Mediatour of God and man, who gave himſelf* ἀντίλυτρον ὑπὲρ πάντων, *a ranſome,* in
Heb. 2. 9. the ſtead, and *for all men* (ſaith St. *Paul.*) And, *He taſted death for every one*
John. 11. 50. 18. 14. 3. 17. (ſaith the *Authour* to the *Hebrews.*) And, He was *that one man,* who, as it was *expedient,* did *dye for the whole nation* of men. And, *God was in him*
2 Cor. 5. 29. *reconciling the world to himſelf, not imputing their ſins.* And, *He came into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might by him be ſaved*
Rom. 5. 17. (or freed from condemnation.) And, *As by the offence of one man judgment came upon all men to condemnation, ſo by the righteouſneſs of one mercy came upon all to juſtification of life.* The end we ſee of our Saviour's performances

Ἵνα ἐκείνου λύσῃ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν, ἀπὸ παντὸς αὐτὸν ἄρῃ ἐφ' ἡμᾶς. Athan. *in paſſ.*

was, that he might *wipe* off the guilt of ſin from all mankind, that he might reverſe the condemnation paſſed thereupon, and that he might remove the puniſhment due thereto; or, that abſolving the firſt man's ſin, he might take it away from the whole race (as St. *Athanaſius* ſpeaks.)

Rom. 4. 23. *All men have ſinned, and come ſhort* (or are deſtitute) *of the glory of God, being juſtified freely by his grace, by the redemption that is in Chriſt Je-*
Gal. 3. 13. 5. 5. *ſus. Chriſt hath redeemed us from the curſe of the law, being made a curſe for us. He was born under the law, that he might redeem thoſe which were*
2 Cor. 5. 21. *under the law. He that knew no ſin, was made ſin* (was puniſhed and dealt with as a ſinner) *that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him;* (that we might be capableof being eſteemed and dealt with as righteous by God upon this accompt.) So that the reſult is, Divine juſtice being fully ſatisfied, and the honour of God fully repaired (in regard to all ſins paſt and future) the mouth of vengeance being ſtopped, the claims of death and hell being evacuated, that general ſentence of condemnation (paſs'd upon all the ſons of *Adam*) is ſuſpended, death ceaſes to reign by any
2 Tim. 1. 10. juſt power, or inevitable neceſſity; (it is, as St. *Paul* ſaith, aboliſhed or abrogated as to any lawfull right, or neceſſary force it hath) the rigour and ſeverity of that law, which upon pein of death exacteth moſt punctual
Gal. 3. 10, 12. Rom. 10, 5. obedience (and which conſequently doth expoſe all men to unavoidable condemnation) is tempered and abated, a foundation is laid for the ſhewing mercy, and granting pardon. In reſpect whereto,

3. Our *Lord* is *the Saviour of all men,* as having in the behalf of mankind tranſacted and ratified a new covenant, very neceſſary for, and very conducible to the ſalvation of mankind; whereby ſalvation is made attainable, and is really tendred unto all, upon feaſible and equal conditions.

According

According to the purport whereof upon any man (however ſtained or loaded with the guilt of moſt heinous tranſgreſſions) his embracing the overtures thereof, conſenting to, and complying with the terms propounded therein, that is, ſincerely believing, and ſeriouſly repenting; returning to God with hearty deſires and earneſt reſolutions to ſerve him; God is ready to diſpenſe mercy and pardon, and immediately receiveth the perſon into grace and favour with him; yea, the man continuing to perform a faithfull (though imperfect) obedience, an obedience ſutable to man's natural infirmity and frailty, and proportionable to the aſſiſtences afforded him; God farther promiſeth to beſtow ineſtimable bleſſings and rewards of joy and happineſs. That covenant which the *Prophets* implied of old, when (beſide, and beyond what the *Jewiſh law* did import) they preached thus, —*Waſh you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings, ceaſe to doe evil* ---- and ---- *though your ſins be as ſcarlet, they ſhall be as white as ſnow, though they be red as crimſon, they ſhall be as wool.* And, *Let the wicked man forſake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon*; And, *If the wicked man will turn from all his ſins, that he hath committed, and keep all my ſtatutes, and doe that which is lawfull and right, he ſhall ſurely live, he ſhall not die* (ſo *God* in *Eſay* and *Ezekiel* declareth his intention to proceed with men, avowing that way of his to be moſt equal and fair.) This is *that Covenant* which our Lord commanded his Apoſtles to declare and propound to all mankind; *Going* (ſaid he to them) *into the whole world, preach the doctrine to every creature*; that Goſpel, according to which, as it is expreſſed in St. *Luke*, *repentance and remiſſion ought to be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jeruſalem*; in reſpect to which St. *Peter* ſays, that *God hath exalted* our Lord *to be a Prince and a Saviour, to grant repentance to Iſrael, and remiſſion of ſins*; (*to grant repentance*, that is, (as the *Apoſtle* to the *Hebrews* and *Clemens Romanus* ſpeak) μετανοίας τόπον, room for repentance, or capacity to receive pardon upon repentance) concerning which *Covenant* that *Clemens* (the fellow-labourer of Saint *Paul*, and whom *Clemens Alexandrinus* calleth an *Apoſtle*) in that excellent, admirable and almoſt Canonical *Epiſtle* to the *Corinthians*, which (as *Euſebius* and *Hierome* tell us) was anciently publickly read in moſt Churches, hath theſe remarkably full and clear expreſſions; *Let us* (ſaith he) *look ſtedfaſtly upon the bloud of Chriſt, and let us ſee how pretious to God his bloud is, which being ſhed for our ſalvation, did bring the grace of repentance to the whole world. Let us attentively regard all ages, and obſerve that in every generation the Lord granted place of repentance to them, who would turn unto him.* This is that *new* and *better covenant, eſtabliſhed upon better promiſes* (cancelling all former, exceptionable, imperfect and ineffectual compacts, referring to man's intereſt and duty) about which the *Apoſtle* to the *Hebrews* diſcourſeth, and whereof he calleth *our Lord* the *Mediatour* and *Sponſor*; in regard to which St. *Paul* calleth him the *Mediatour between God and man*; plainly declaring all men to have a concernment and intereſt therein; for this ſuppoſition he uſeth as an argument proving God's univerſal deſire of man's converſion and ſalvation: *Who would have all men to be ſaved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one Mediatour between God and man, the man Chriſt Jeſus.* By virtue of which *Covenant* it is, that any ſuch

Eſa. 1. 16.

Iſa. 55. 7.

Ezek. 18. 21.

Mark. 16. 15.

Luke 24. 47.

Acts 5. 31.

Phil. 4. 3. Θαμμασία. Euſeb. Ἐν πλείσαις ἐκκλησίαις. Euſeb.

Ἀπενίσωμεν εἰς τὸ αἷμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ ἴδωμεν ὡς ὄτι τίμιον τῷ Θεῷ αἷμα αὐτοῦ, ὅτι διὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν σωτηρίαν ἐκχυθὲν, πᾶσι τῷ κόσμῳ μετανοίας χάριν ὑπέτυχεν. Ἀπενίσωμεν εἰς γενεὰς πάσας, καὶ καταμάθωμεν ὅτι ἐν γενεᾷ καὶ γενεᾷ μετανοίας τόπον ἔδωκεν ὁ δεσπότης τοῖς βουλομένοις ἐπιστραφῆναι ἐπ' αὐτόν. Clem. ad Corinth.

Heb. 8. 6. 9. 15. 12. 24. 7. 22. 2 Cor. 3. 6.

1 Tim. 2. 5.

Quo dicto ostenditur nullum hominem secundum naturam esse pollutum, sed æqualiter omnes ad Christi Evangelium provocari. Hier. *ad* Aug. *Epist. XI.*

degrees of love or fear toward God (such as men are capable of) are available, any righteous performances, such as our weakness can produce, are acceptable, any honest endeavours do receive countenance and encouragement; and that (as St. *Peter* observed) *in every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted by him*; although his fear of God be not so intense, or pure; his righteousness not so exact and unblameable, as according to extremity of law and duty, they should be. From which *Covenant* so far as is any man, according to God's intention and desire, from being excluded, that all men are seriously invited, vehemently exhorted, earnestly intreated to enter into it, and to partake the benefits exhibited thereby. Every man who feeleth himself to want those benefits, and is desirous of mercy and ease from the guilt and burthen of his sins, may come and welcome. *Hoe every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters*; So the *Evangelical Prophet* proclaims; and, *If any man thirsteth, let him come to me and drink*, crieth *our Lord*; and, *Come to me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* (Δεῦτε πάντες, *Come all to me:* All men therefore (saith *Origen*) who from the nature of sin do labour and are burthened, are called to that rest; which is with the word of God.) And, *in Christ's name* (saith St. *Paul*) *we are Embassadours, as that God by us intreateth, we pray for Christ be reconciled to God*; the purport of which Embassie, together with its extent, he otherwhere thus expresseth, πανοῦν προαγγέλλει τοῖς ἀνθρώποις πᾶσι παντα χοῦ μετανοεῖν, *He now proclaimeth to all men every-where that they should repent*; he consequently holds forth to all the benefits annexed to repentance. But of this we spake formerly.

Acts 10. 34

Isa. 55. 1.
John 7. 37.
Matt. 11. 28.

Πάντες ἓν οἱ ἄνθρωποι διὰ τὴν τῆ ἁμαρτίας φύσιν κοπιῶντες καὶ πεφορτισμένοι καλεῖσθαι ὅπὶ τὴν πρὸς τὸν λόγον τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀνάπαυσιν. Orig. *in* Cels. 3.

2 Cor. 5. 20. Acts 17. 30.

4. Our *Lord Jesus is the Saviour of all men* as having purchased and procured for them competent aids, whereby they are enabled to perform the conditions required of them in order to their salvation; to acquire a sufficient knowledge of their duty, to subdue their bad inclinations and lusts, to withstand temptations; or briefly, whereby they are enabled sincerely to repent of their sins, and acceptably to perform their due obedience. The truth of this point, taking in the consideration of man's natural state, may by good consequence be inferr'd from the truth of the Points foregoing. If men are naturally so dead in trespasses and sins, so enslaved and sold under sin; so very prone to evil, and averse to good; so dark and blind that they cannot well discern what they should doe, so corrupt and weak that they cannot perform what they know and confess to be good (as St. *Paul* affirmeth men to be) and consequently are of themselves indisposed to perform the duties acceptable to God, and requisite by his appointment toward their salvation, than either our Lord hath provided for them a communication of grace sufficient to countervail or surmount that natural impotency, or all his designs for their good are imperfect or inconsistent (aiming at an end, without proving requisite means, or removing necessary obstructions) and his performances, whereby the forementioned benefits were procured, do prove ineffectual and fruitless. For God bing appeased, and become well-affected to man's salvation, divine justice being satisfied, the rigour of law being mitigated, repentance being made available, and an obedience, agreeable to man's frailty, becoming acceptable, with all other the immediate

Eph. 2. 1.
Colos. 2. 13.
Rom. 7. 14, 15.
Eph. 5. 8.
2 Cor. 4. 6.
2 Pet. 1. 19.
&c.

Ὁ ὅπὶ τὰ αἰσχρὰ ὁλισθὼν αὐτοφυῶς ἀσθενείας ἔχων. Max. Tir. *dis.* 22.

Si Deus non operatur in nobis nullius possumus esse participes virtutis; sine hoc quippe bono nihil est bonum, sine hac luce nihil est lucidum, sine hac sapientia nihil sanum, sine hac justitia nihil rectum. De Voc. Gent. I. 8.

diate results of our Saviour's transactions for man, would signifie nothing in regard to him, who still lieth under a necessity of sinning, or an inability of performing that, which is indispensably exacted from him toward a complete enjoyment of those benefits and favours. In vain is the debt paid, and the bond cancelled, and the prison set open, and liberty proclaimed, and the prisoner called forth, if he be not himself able to knock off the fetters, which detain him, and there is no help afforded, by which he may doe it. But our Lord hath surely laid his designs more advisedly, and hath prosecuted his work more perfectly. Wherefore we may suppose that a competency of grace and spiritual assistence is by virtue of our Saviour's performances really imparted to every man, qualifying him to doe what God requires, and is ready to accept from him in order to his welfare; that our Saviour hath sent abroad his holy Spirit (that fountain of all true goodness, of all spiritual light, strength and comfort) like the Sun, to shine, to warm, to dispense benign influences over the world; although it shineth not so brightly and vigorously; and its presence is not so visible and sensible in one place, as another; which holy Spirit, as it is in its essence omnipresent, so it is likewise in its energy, incessantly working (in reasonable measure, right manner, and fit season, as wisedom ordereth) upon the minds and affections of men, infusing good thoughts and motions, impressing arguments and motives to good practice, cherishing and promoting good pupoſes; checking bad designs, restraining and reclaiming from bad courses. Our reason, however aided by exteriour instruction and excitement, being unable to deal with those mighty temptations, oppositions and discouragements we are to encounter with, he hath given us a wise and powerfull spirit, to guide and advise us, to excite and encourage us, to relieve and succour us in all our religious practice and spiritual warfare. So that all deliverance from the prevalency of temptation and sin we owe to his grace and assistence. That to these purposes the holy Spirit is plentifully conferred upon all the visible members of the Christian Church we have plainly declared in Scripture; It was a promise concerning the Evangelical times, that God would pour forth his spirit upon all flesh; The collation thereof is a main part of the Evangelical Covenant (into a participation of which every Christian is admitted) it being the finger of God whereby God's law is impressed upon their inward parts, and engraven in their hearts (as the Prophets describe the effects of this Covenant.) And the end of our Saviour's passion is by St. *Paul* declared to be, *that the blessing of Abraham might come unto the Gentiles, through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit by faith*; that is, that becoming Christians we might partake thereof. And the Apostolical Ministery (that is, preaching the Gospel, and dispensing the privileges thereof) is therefore styled, διακονία πνεύματος, *the ministery of the Spirit*. And the *tasting of the heavenly gift, and partaking the Holy Ghost* is (according to the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*) part of the character of a visible Christian (such a Christian, who might παραπεσεῖν, *fall away*, as he supposeth, and *re-crucifie the Lord, and expose him to shame*;) and St. *Peter* makes reception of the *Holy Ghost* to be a concomitant or consequent of *Baptism*; *Repent*, saith he, *and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost; for the promise* (or that promise of the Spirit, which is called, *the spirit of promise*, peculiar to the Gospel) *is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.* (That is, the *Holy Spirit* is promised to all, how far distant soever in time

Τοῖς ἐν βίῳ ἐπαρηγμένοις ἰσχὺν πρὸς τὴν λοιπὴν σωτηρίαν ἐμπνεῖ. Clem. Alex. *Strom. VII.* p. 523.

Joel 2. 28. Acts 2. 28.

Jer. 31. 33. Ezek. 11. 19. Heb. 8. 11. 2 Cor. 3. 3. Gal. 3. 14.

1 Cor. 3. 8. 1 Thess. 2. 3.

Heb. 6. 4, 5.

Acts 2. 38. Eph. 1. 13.

time or place, who shall be invited unto, and shall embrace Christianity;) and accordingly St. *Paul* saith of *Christians*, that *God according to his mercy hath saved us by the laver of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.* And, *Know ye not* (saith *he* to the *Corinthians*) *that ye are the temple of God; and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you?* (that is, Do ye not understand this to be a common property and privilege of *Christians*, such as ye profess your selves to be?) And the union of all Christians into *one body*, doth, according to St. *Paul*, result from this *one Spirit*, as a common soul imparted to them all, inanimating and actuating the whole body, and every member thereof. For *by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free, and have been all made to drink of one spirit.* And it hath been the doctrine constantly with general consent delivered in and by the Catholick Church, that to all persons, by the holy mystery of *Baptism* duly initiated into *Christianity*, and admitted into the communion of *Christ*'s body, the grace of the *Holy Spirit* is communicated, enabling them to perform the conditions of piety and vertue, which they undertake; and continually watching over them for accomplishment of those purposes; which Spirit they are admonished not to resist, to abuse, to grieve, to quench; but to use it well, and improve its grace to the working out their salvation. Thus much concerning the result of our Saviour's performances, in this kind, in respect to the community of Christians, we learn from the holy *Scripture* and *Ecclesiastical Tradition* interpreting it; whence we may discern, that the communications of grace do not always flow from any special love or absolute decree concerning men, but do commonly proceed from the general kindness and mercy of God; by our Lord procured for mankind; and consequently we may thence collect, that somewhat of this nature is to the same purpose, from the same source, and upon the same accompt, also granted and dispensed to others. Unto *Christians* indeed this great benefit (for the reward, the encouragement, the support of their faith; and for promoting their obedience, who are in a nearer capacity and more immediate tendency to salvation) is in a more plentifull measure, and a more conspicuous manner dispensed; but that besides that dispensation, there have been other (not so plainly signified, or expresly promised, yet really imparted) communications of grace, in virtue of our *Saviour*'s merits, there are (beside the main reason alledged, inferring it from our Lord's being the Saviour of all men) divers good inducements to believe. For even those *Christians*, to whom upon their faith the Holy Spirit is promised and bestowed, are by previous operations of God's grace (opening their minds, inclining their heart, and tempering their affections) induced to embrace *Christianity*, faith it self being a gift of God, and a fruit of the Holy Spirit. And before our Saviour's coming all good men have thereby been instructed and enabled to doe well. And before any special revelation made, or any particular covenant enacted (before the enclosure of a particular People or Church, the confinement of God's extraordinary presence and providence to one place) divine grace appears diffused over several Nations, being watchfull in guiding and moving men to good, and withdrawing them from evil; neither is there reason why such an appropriation of special graces and blessings (upon special reasons) unto some should be conceived to limit or contract God's general favour, or to withdraw his ordinary graces from others. God surely (*who is*, πλούσιος ἐν ἐλέει, *rich in mercy*; yea, hath ὑπερβάλλοντα πλοῦτον χάριτος,

Tit. 3. 4.
1 Cor. 3. 16.
2 Cor. 12. 13.
Eph. 4. 30.
1 Cor. 12. 7.
Phil. 2. 13.
Eph. 2. 8.
Gal. 5. 22.
Luke 24. 45.
Matt. 16. 17.
John 16. 12.
1 Cor. 12. 3.
Eph. 2. 4.
2. 7.

Ex quo perspicuum fit naturâ omnibus inesse Dei notitiam, nec quenquam sine Christo nasci, & non habere semina in se sapientiæ, justitiæ, reliquarumque virtutum. Unde multi absque fide, & Evangelio Christi vel sapienter faciunt aliqua vel sanctè, &c. Hieron. *in* Galat. 1.

ελίᾳ, (an *excessive riches of grace*,) is not so poor or parsimonious, that being liberal to some should render him sparing toward others; his grace is not like the Sea, which if it overflow upon one shore, must therefore retire from another; if it grow deep in one place, must become shallower in another. *Is the Spirit of the Lord straitned?* it is a question in * *Micah*; and, *Is my hand shortned at all, that it cannot redeem?* is another question in *Esay*: *No*; *The Lord's hand is not shortned that it cannot save, nor his ear heavy, that it cannot hear*; at any time, in any place; he is no less able, no less ready than he ever was to afford help to his poor creatures, where-ever it is needfull or opportune. As there was of old an *Abimelech* among the *Philistines*, whom God by special warning deterr'd from commission of sin; a divine *Melchisedek* among the *Canaanites*; a discreet and honest *Jethro* in *Madian*; a very religious and vertuous *Job* in *Arabia*; who by complying with God's grace did evidence the communication thereof in several Nations; so it is not unreasonable to suppose the like cause now, although we cannot by like attestation certifie concerning the particular effects thereof. We may at least discern and shew very conspicuous footsteps of divine grace, working in part, and producing no despicable fruits of moral vertue, of justice and honesty, temperance and sobriety, benignity and bounty, courage and constancy in worthy enterprises, meekness, patience, modesty; prudence and discretion; yea, of piety and devotion in some manner) even among *Pagans*, which if we do not allow to have been in all respects so complete, as to instate the persons endewed with them, or practisers of them in God's favour, or to bring them to salvation; yet those qualities and actions (in degree, or in matter at least, so good, and so conformable to God's law) we can hardly deny to have been the gifts of God, and the effects of divine grace; they at least themselves acknowledged so much; (for, *Nulla sine Deo mens bona est*, *No mind is good without God*, said *Seneca*; and, θεία μοῖρα φαίνεται παραγιγνομένη ἑκάστῃ, οἷς παραγίνεται, *Vertue appears to proceed from a divine dispensation to them who partake of it*, said *Socrates*) and, αἱ ἄριστοι φύσεις, ἀμφισβητήσιμοι ἐν μέσῳ τῷ ἀκρατεῖ κακίᾳ καθεστηκυῖαι, δέονται ξυναγωνιστοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ξυλλήπτορος τοῦ ὅπῃ τὰ βέλτιστα τὰ κρείττω ῥοπῆς καὶ χειραγωγίας. *The best-natured souls being constituted in the middle between the highest vertue and extreme wickedness, do need God to be their succourer and assistant in the inclining and leading them to the better side*; saith *Max. Tyr.* XXII. St. *Austin* himself, who seems the least favourable in his judgment concerning their actions and state, who calls their vertues but images and shadows of vertue (*non veras, sed verisimiles*) splendid sins; acknowledges those vertuous dispositions and deeds to be the gifts of God, to be laudable, to procure some reward, to avail so far, that they, because of them, shall receive a more tolerable and mild treatment from divine justice; which things considered, such persons do at least by vertue of grace imparted to them obtain some part of salvation, or an imperfect kind of salvation, which they owe to our Lord, and in regard whereto he may be called in a sort their *Saviour*.

Secundum Scripturam credimus & piissimè confitemur, quod nunquam universitati hominum divinæ providentiæ cura defuerit. Quem licèt exceptum sibi populum specialibus ad pietatem direxerit institutis, nulli tamen nationi hominum bonitatis suæ dona subtraxit, &c. De Vocat. Gen. I. 5.

* Mic. 2. 7. Isa. 50. 2. 59. 1.

Gen. 20. 3. 26. 8.

Exod. 18.

Καθ' ἑαυτὸν ἐδικαίου πολὺ καὶ ἡ φιλοσοφία τοὺς ἕλληνας. Clem. Alex.

Mortalem vitam honestare possunt, æternam conferre non possunt. Prosper *in Collat. cap.* 26.

(*Prodesse ad salutem.* Aug. Prosper, Fulgent, &c.)

Nemo vir magnus sine aliquo afflatu divino unquam fuit. Cic. *de Nat. deorum II. sub fin.*

Sen. *Epist.* 73.

—*Quæ secundum justitiæ regulam non solùm vituperare non possumus, sed etiam meritò rectéque laudamus.* Plat. Menon. *fine.*

Aug. *de sp. & lit.* 27.

—*Dei dona. Epist.* 130. Aug.

But

Tolerabilius puniuntur. Minùs Fabricius quàm Catilina punietur, &c. —non veras virtutes habendo, sed à veris virtutibus non plurimùm deviando. Aug.

But although the torrent of natural pravity hath prevailed so far, as that we cannot assign, or nominate any (among those, who have lived out of the pale) who certainly or probably have obtained salvation, yet doth it not follow thence that a sufficient grace was wanting to them. The most universal practice contrary to the intents of grace doth not evince a defect of graces. For we see that the same cause hath in a manner universally overborn and defeated other means and methods designed and dispensed by God for the instruction and emendation of mankind.

Gen. 6. 3. 1 Pet. 3. 20. Neh. 9. 20. Isa. 5. 4. Psal. 14. Rom. 1. 21. 1 Kings 19. 14, 18. Psal. 145. 9. Psal. 25. 8.

God's Spirit did long strive with the Inhabitants of the *old World*; yet no more than one Family was bettered, or saved thereby. God by his good Spirit instructed the *Israelites* in the Wilderness (as *Nehemiah* saith) yet no more than two persons did get into *Canaan:* That people afterward had afforded to them great advantages of knowledge and excitements to piety; (so that God intimates, that he could not have done more for them, in that regard, than he had done.) Yet, *There is none that understandeth, or seeketh after God*, was a complaint in the best times. The *Pagans* had the means of knowing God, as St. *Paul* affirmeth, yet generally they grew vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkned; from which like cases and examples we may infer, that divine grace might be really imparted, although no effect correspondent to its main design were produced. Neither, because we cannot alledge any evident instances of persons converted or saved by virtue of this grace (this *parcior occultiorque gratia, more sparing and secret grace*, as the good Writer *de Vocatione Gentium* calls it) are we forced to grant there were none such; but as in *Israel* when *Elias* said, the children of *Israel* have *forsaken God's Covenant, thrown down his Altars, and slain his Prophets with the sword; And I, I onely am left*; there were yet in *Israel*, living closely, *seven thousand knees, who had not bowed to Baal:* so among the generations of men, commonly overgrown with ignorance and impiety, there might (for all that we can know) be divers persons indiscernible to common view, who by complying with the influences of God's grace have obtained competently to know God, and to reverence him; sincerely to love goodness, and hate wickedness; with an honest heart, to observe the laws of reason and righteousness; in such a manner and degree, which God might accept; so that the grace afforded might not onely *sufficere omnibus in testimonium* (*suffice to convince all men*) but *quibusdam in remedium* (*to correct and cure some*) as that Writer *de Voc. Gent.* speaks. The consideration of God's nature and providence doth serve farther to persuade the truth of this assertion. If God be *rich in mercy* and bounty toward all his creatures, as such) and such he frequently asserts himself to be) if he be all-present, and all-provident, as he certainly is, how can we conceive him to stand as an unconcerned spectatour of what men doe, in affairs of this consequence? that he should be present beholding men to run precipitantly into desperate mischiefs and miscarriages, without offering to stay or obstruct them; struggling with their vices and follies, without affording them any relief or furtherance; assaulted by strong temptations, without yielding any support or succour; panting after rest and ease, without vouchsafing some guidance and assistance toward the obtaining them? how can he see men invincibly erring and inevitably sinning, without making good what the *Psalmist* says of him: *Good and upright is the Lord, therefore will he teach sinners in the way*; to withhold his grace in such cases seemeth inconsistent with the kind

kind and compassionate nature of God, especially such as now it stands, being reconciled to mankind, by the *Mediator of God and men*, *Christ Jesus*. He also, that is so bountifull and indulgent toward all men in regard to their bodies and temporal estate; *who preserveth their life from destruction*, who protecteth them continually from danger and mischief; *who openeth his hand, and satisfieth the desires of every living thing*; *who satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness*. Who (as St. *Paul* speaketh) *filleth mens hearts with food and gladness*, is it likely that he should altogether neglect their spiritual welfare; and leave their souls utterly destitute of all sustenance or comfort; that he should suffer them to lie fatally exposed to eternal death and ruine; without offering any means of redress or recovery? to conceive so of God, seemed very unreasonable even to a *Pagan* Philosopher: *Do you think* (saith *Max. Tyrius*) *that divination, poetry, and such like things, are by divine inspiration insinuated into mens souls, and that vertue* (so much better, and so much rarer a thing) *is the work of moral art? You have forsooth a worthy conceit of God, who take him to be liberal in bestowing mean things, and sparing of better things. He that* (as St. *Paul* saith) *giveth to all men life, breath, and all things*, will he withhold from any that best of gifts, and most worthy of him to give, that grace, whereby he may be able to serve him, to praise him, to glorify him; yea, to please and gratifie him; to save a creature and subject of his; the thing wherein he so much delighteth? From hence also, that God hath vouchsafed general testimonies of his goodness, inducements to seek him, footsteps whereby he may be discovered and known, a light of reason and law of nature written upon mens hearts; attended with satisfactions, and checks of conscience; so many dispositions to knowledge and obedience (as St. *Paul* teacheth us) we may collect that he is not deficient in communicating interiour assistences, promoting the good use and improvement of those talents; for that otherwise the bestowing them is frustraneous and useless; being able to produce no good effect; yea, it rather is an argument of unkindness, being apt onely to produce an ill effect in those, upon whom it is conferr'd; an aggravation of sin, an accumulation of guilt and wrath upon them.

Pſal. 103. 4. 145. 16. 107. 9. Acts 14. 17. Max. Tyr. *Diſſ. XXII.*

Ἢ πολλοῦ ἄξιον νομίζεις τὸ θεῖον, περὶ μὲν τὰ φαῦλα καὶ ἁπλᾶς καὶ ἀφθόνως παρεσκευασμένον, περὶ δὲ τὰ χρείττω ἄπορον. Acts 17. 25.

Acts 14. 17. 17. 27. Rom. 1. 19. 2. 15.

If it be said, that having such grace is inconsistent with the want of an explicit knowledge of *Christ*, and of faith in him; why may not we say, that as probably (so St. *Chrysostome*, *vid. Mont. App. I.*) most good people before our Lord's coming received grace without any such knowledge or faith; that as to Idiots and Infants our Saviour's meritorious performances are applied (in a manner unknowable by us) without so much as a capacity to know or believe any thing; that so we (to whom God's judgments are inscrutable, and his ways uninvestigable) know not how grace may be communicated unto, and *Christ*'s merits may avail for other ignorant persons? in respect to whom we may apply that of Saint *John*; *The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.* However that such persons may have a grace capacifying them to arrive to that knowledge and faith, to which fuller communications of grace are promised; so that in reasonable esteem (as we shall presently shew) the revelation of Evangelical Truth and the gift of faith may be supposed to be conferred upon all men--- so that we may apply to them that in the *Revelation*; *Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man will hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in unto him, and sup with him;*

Rom. 11. 33. Joh. 1. 5. Apoc. 3. 20. Εἰ τυφλοὶ ἦτε οὐκ ἂν εἴχετε ἁμαρτίαν. Joh. 9. 41. 15. 22.

him; *and he with me* (that is, Behold, I allure every man to the knowledge and embraeing of Christianity; if any man will open his mind and heart; so as to comply with my solicitations, I am ready to bestow upon him the participation of Evangelical mercies and blessings) and to such persons those promises and rules in the *Gospel*, may appertain; *He that asketh receiveth, He that seeketh findeth; to him that knocketh it shall be opened: The heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him. He that is* ἐν ἐλαχίστῳ πιστὸς (*faithfull in the use of the least grace*) shall be rewarded. And, *to him that hath* (or that diligently keepeth and husbandeth what he hath) *shall more be given.*

Luke 11. 10, 13.
Luke 19. 17.
19. 26.

And how God sometimes dealeth with such persons the eminent instances of St. *Paul* and *Cornelius* do shew. But concerning this point I spake somewhat before, and have perhaps been too large now; I shall onely add that saying of the wise Writer *de Voc. Gen. A pious mind* (saith he) *should not, I think, be troubled at that question, which is made concerning the conversion of all, or not all men; if we will not obscure those things which are clear, by those things which are secret; and while we wantonly insist upon things shut up, we be not excluded from those which are open and plain:* which in effect is the same with this; that since we are plainly taught, that our Lord is the Saviour of all men; and it is consequent thence that he hath procured grace sufficiently capacifying all men to obtain salvation; we need not perplex the business, or obscure so apparent a truth by debating how that grace is imparted; or by labouring overmuch in reconciling the dispensation thereof with other dispensations of providence.

Puto quod pius sensus non debeat in ea quæstione turbari, quam de omnium & non omnium hominum conversione generatur; si ea quæ clara sunt non de his quæ occulta sunt obscuremus, & dum procaciter insistimus clausis excludamur ab apertis, &c. Lib. 1. cap. 8.

SERMON XLI.

The Doctrine of Universal Redemption asserted and explain'd.

1 TIM. IV. 10.

——The living God; who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.

5. JESUS is *the Saviour of all men*, as the conducter of all men into and through the way of salvation. It is a very proper title, and most due to those brave Captains, who by their wisedom and valour have freed their Countrey from straits and oppressions. So were those *Judges* and *Princes*, who anciently delivered *Israel* from their enemies,

mies, commonly styled: *In the time of their trouble* (say the *Levites* in *Nehemiah*) *when they cried unto thee thou heardst them from heaven, and according to thy manifold mercies thou gavest them Saviours, who saved them out of the hand of the enemy*; so are *Othniel* and *Ehud* particularly called; and *Moses* signally: *The same* (saith St. *Stephen* of him) *did God send to be* ἄρχοντα καὶ λυτρωτὴν, *a Commander and a Saviour* (or *Redeemer*) *to the children of Israel*; for that he by a worthy and happy conduct did free them from the *Egyptian* slavery. And thus was *Demetrius* by the *Athenians* (for his delivering them from the *Macedonian* subjection, and restoring their liberty to them) entitled εὐεργέτης καὶ σωτὴρ, *a Benefactour and Saviour*. Thus with greatest reason is *Jesus* so called, as being ἀρχηγὸς τῆ σωτηρίας, *the Captain of Salvation* (so he is called by the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*) ἀρχηγὸς ζωῆς (*the Captain of life*, as St. *Peter* names him, the chief leader unto eternal life) ἀρχηγὸς πίστεως (*the Captain of our faith*; he that hath revealed that saving doctrine, which is the power of God to salvation) and these titles we have conjoyned by St. *Peter* in the *Acts*; *Him hath God exalted* ἀρχηγὸν καὶ σωτῆρα, *as a Captain and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel and remission of sins*. This he is to us several ways, by direction both instructive, and exemplary; by his protection and governance; by his mating and quelling the enemies of man's salvation; which things more specially and completely he hath perform'd in respect to faithfull Christians, yet in a manner also he hath truly done them for and toward all men; as we shall distinctly consider.

Neh. 9. 27. Judg. 3. 9, 15. Acts 7. 35. Heb. 2. 10. Acts 3. 15. Heb. 12. 2. Rom. 1. 16. Acts 5. 31.

6. *Jesus* is *the Saviour of all men* (we say) as having perfectly discovered and demonstrated the way and means of salvation; the gratious purposes of God concerning it; the duties required by God in order to it: the great helps and encouragements to seek it; the mighty determents from neglecting it; the whole will of God, and concernment of man in relation thereto; briefly, all saving truths he hath revealed unto all men; *mysteries* of truth, which *were hidden from ages and generations*, which no fancy of man could invent, no understanding could reach, no reason could by discussion clear (concerning the nature, providence, will and purpose of God; the nature, original and state of man; concerning the laws and rules of practice, the helps thereto, the rewards thereof, whatever is important for us to know in order to happiness) he did plainly discover, and bring to light; he did with valid sorts of demonstration assert and confirm. The doing which (as having so much efficacy toward salvation, and being ordinarily so necessary thereto) is often called *saving*; as particularly by St. *James*; when he saith, *He that turns a sinner from the errour of his way shall save a soul from death*. And by St. *Paul*; *Take heed to thy word and doctrine, for so doing thou shalt save thy self, and thy hearers*. That our *Lord* hath thus (according to his design, and according to reasonable esteem) *saved all men*, we are authorized by the *holy Scripture* to say; for he is there represented to be *the light of the world*; *the true light that enlighteneth every man coming into the world*; *the day-spring from on high, which hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death, and to guide our feet in the way of peace*. By him *the saving grace of God hath appeared unto all men*. By him (as *Esay* prophesied, and St. *John* the *Baptist* applied it) *all flesh did see the salvation of God*. Of him it was also foretold (as St. *Paul* teacheth us) *I have set thee for the light of the Nations, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth*. *Coming he preached peace* τοῖς μακρὰν καὶ τοῖς ἐγγὺς (*longè latéque*) *to them that were far, and them that were near*, that is, *to all*

Col. 1. 26. Rom. 16. 25. Jam. 5. 20. 1 Tim. 4. 16. 1 Cor. 9. 22. Rom. 11. 14. 2 Tim. 3. 15. σοφίσαι εἰς σωτηρίαν. John 8. 12. 1. 9. Luke 1. 79. Tit. 2. 11. 3. 4. 2 Tim. 1. 10. Luke 3. 6. Acts 13. 47. Eph. 2. 17.

John 9. 5. *men every where. While I am in the World*, ſaid he, *I am the light of the world; ſhining, like the Sun*, indifferently unto all; and when he withdrew his corporal preſence, he farther virtually diffuſed his light, for he ſent his meſſengers with a general commiſſion and command to teach all men concerning the benefits procured for them, and the duties required from them: *Going into the world, make all nations diſciples, teaching them to obſerve all that I commanded you. Going into the world, preach the Goſpel unto every creature* (or *to the whole creation:*) *So it ought to be, that in his name ſhould be preached repentance and remiſſion of ſins unto all Nations.* And, ſuch was the tenour of the *Apoſtolical* commiſſion; *Thou ſhalt be witneſs for him toward all men*; ſaid *Ananias to* St. *Paul.* Accordingly, in compliance with thoſe orders, did the *Apoſtles*, in God's name, inſtruct and admoniſh all men, plainly teaching, ſeriouſly inviting to, ſtrongly perſuading and earneſtly entreating all men to embrace the truth, and enjoy the benefits of the Goſpel, and conſequently to be ſaved: *The times of ignorance* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *God having winked at, doth now invite all men everywhere to repent*; And, *We are Embaſſadours for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you by us, We pray you in Chriſt's ſtead, be reconciled to God— we pray you*, you as members of that world, which God was in *Chriſt* reconciling to himſelf; And, *We preach Chriſt —Warning every man, and teaching every man in all wiſedom, that we may preſent every man perfect in Chriſt Jeſus* (or *render every man a good Chriſtian.*) Thus was the Goſpel according to our Saviour's intent and order preached (as St. *Paul* ſaith of it) ἐν πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει τῇ ὑπὸ τὸν οὐρανόν, *in the whole creation under heaven*; thus did God ſhew, that he would *have all men to be ſaved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth*; whence our *Lord* (in regard to the nature and deſign of his performance in this kind) is the common Saviour as the common Maſter of truth, and Enlightner of the world, and Proclaimer of God's will to mankind.

Matt. 28 19, 20. Mark 16. 15. Luke 24. 47. Acts 22. 15. 26. 17. Acts 17. 30. 2 Cor. 5. 20. Coloſ. 1. 28. Acts 2. 40. Col. 1. 23. 1 Tim. 2. 4. Joh. 1. 18.

If now it be inquired or objected; why then is not the Goſpel revealed unto men? how comes it to paſs that no ſound of this ſaving word, no glimpſe of this heavenly light doth arrive to many Nations? how can ſo general and large intention conſiſt with ſo particular and ſparing execution? what benefit can we imagine them capable to receive from this performance of our Saviour, who ſtill do ſit in total ignorance of the *Goſpel*, in darkneſs, and the ſhadow of death? *How can they call upon him, in whom they believe not? and how can they believe in him, of whom they have not heard?*

Luke 1. 74. Matt. 4. 16. Rom. 10. 14.

To this ſuggeſtion I anſwer,

1. That God's intentions are not to be interpreted, nor his performances eſtimated by events, depending on the contingency of humane actions, but by his own declarations and precepts, together with the ordinary proviſion of competent means, in their own nature ſufficient to produce thoſe effects, which he declares himſelf to intend, or to perform. What he reveals himſelf to deſign he doth really deſign it, what he ſays, that he performeth, he (according to moral eſteem, that is ſo far as to ground duties of gratitude and honour, proceedings of juſtice and reward) doth perform, although the thing upon other accompts be not effected.

Thus for inſtance, God would have all men to live together here in peace, in order, in health, conveniently, comfortably, chearfully; according to reaſon, with vertue and juſtice; and in the beſt ſtate toward happineſs; for theſe purpoſes he hath endewed them with reaſonable faculties, he hath engraven on their minds a natural law, he hath furniſhed them

them with all sorts of instruments and helps conducible to those ends, he promoteth them by dispensations of providence, and (probably) by internal influences of grace; yet often all those means (by the perverseness and stupidity of men) do prove ineffectual, so that wars, disorders, diseases, vices, iniquities and oppressions, troubles and miseries do commonly abound in the world. Likewise God desires, that in his Church knowledge and piety, peace and charity, and good order should grow and flourish; to which purposes he hath appointed Teachers to instruct, and Governours to watch over his people; he hath obliged each man to advise and admonish his brother; he hath declared holy precepts and rules of practice; he hath propounded vast encouragements and rewards, and threatned dreadfull punishments; he hath promised and doth afford requisite assistences; being himself always present and ready to promote those ends by his grace; yet notwithstanding by the voluntary neglect or abuse of these means (the guides being blind, negligent, unfaithfull; or the people being indocil, sluggish, refractary; or both perverted with bad affections) often ignorance, errour and impiety prevail, love is cool and dead, schisms and factions are rife in the Church. Which events are not to be conceived derogatory to God's good-will and good intentions, or to his kind and carefull providence toward men; but we are notwithstanding to esteem and acknowledge him the authour and donour of those good things; in respect to them no less blessing and praising him, than if they were really accomplished by man's concurrence and compliance; he having done his part in that due measure and manner, which wisedom prompts; having indeed done the same, as when they are affected. So God having expresly declared that he would have all men to know and embrace the Gospel, having made a universal promulgation thereof, having sent forth *Apostles* to disseminate it every-where, having obliged every man to conser his best endeavour toward the propagation thereof; if by the want of fidelity, zeal, or industry in them, to whom this care is intrusted, or upon whom this duty is incumbent; or if by the careleſneſs and stupidity of those, who do not regard what is done in the world; or if by mens voluntary shutting their eyes, or stopping their ears (as the *Jews* did of old to the Prophetical instructions and admonitions) God's heavenly truth becometh not universally known; 'tis not reasonable to impute this defailance to God, or to conceive him therefore not universally to desire and design mens instruction and salvation consequent thereon. Let me (for the illustration of this matter) put a case, or propound a similitude. Suppose a great Kingdom consisting of several Provinces should have revolted from their Sovereign; disclaiming his authority, neglecting and disobeying his laws; That the good Prince, out of his goodness and pity toward them (and upon other good considerations moving him thereto, suppose the mediation of his own Son) instead of prosecuting them with deserved vengeance, should grant a general pardon and amnesty, in these terms, or upon these conditions, that whoever of those rebels willingly should come in, acknowledge his fault, and promise future loyalty, or obedience to his laws declared to them, should be received into favour, have impunity, enjoy protection, and obtain rewards from him. Farther, for the effectuating this gratious intent, suppose that he should appoint and commissionate Messengers, impowring and charging them to divulge the purport of this act of grace to all the people of that Kingdom. Admit now, that these Messengers should go forth, and seat themselves onely in some Provinces of that Kingdom, proclaiming this universal pardon (universal

versal as to the design, and as to the tenour thereof) onely in those, neglecting others; or that, striving to propagate it farther, they should be rejected and repelled; or that from any the like cause the knowledge thereof should not reach to some remoter Provinces; it is plain, that indeed the effect of that pardon would be obstructed by such a carriage of the affair; but the tenour of that act would not thereby be altered; nor would the failure in execution (consequent upon the Ministers or the peoples misbehaviour) detract from the real amplitude of the Prince's intent; no more, than the wilfull incredulity, refusal, or non-compliance of some persons where the business is promulged and notified, would prejudice the same. 'Tis plain the Prince meant favourably toward all, and provided carefully for them; although by accident (not imputable to him) the designed favours and benefits do not reach all. The case so plainly sutes our purpose, that I need not make any application. The *holy Fathers* do by several like similitudes endeavour to illustrate this matter, and somewhat to assoil the difficulty. They compare our Saviour to the Sun, who shines indifferently to all the world, although there be some private corners and secret caves, to which his light doth not come; although some shut their windows or their eyes and exclude it; although some are blind and do not see it. That mystical Sun of righteousness (saith St. *Ambrose*) is risen to all, came to all, did suffer and rose again for all --- but if any one doth not believe in *Christ*, he defrauds himself of the general benefit. As if one shutting the windows should exclude the beams of the Sun, the Sun is not therefore not risen to all. They compare our Lord to a Physician, who professes to relieve and cure all, that shall have recourse to his help; but doth cure onely those, who seek for remedy, and are willing to take the medicine; because all (saith * St. *Ambrose* again) do not desire cure, but most do shun it, lest the ulcer should smart by medicaments, therefore *volentes curat, non astringit invitos*; he cures onely the willing, doth not compell those that are unwilling; they onely receive health, who desire medicine. Evangelical grace (say they) is like a fountain standing openly, to which all men have free access; at which all men may quench their thirst; if they will enquire after it, and go thereto. *The fountain of life* (saith *Arnobius*) *is open to all; nor is any man hindred or driven from the right of drinking it.* The covenant of grace is (say they) a door standing open to all, whereinto all have liberty to enter ---- *when an entrance* (saith St. *Chrysostome*) *being opened to all, and there being nothing that hinders, some being wilfully naught abide without, they have no other but their own wickedness to impute their destruction unto.*

And again he puts the question, *If Christ enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world, how is it that so many remain unenlighten'd*, &c. To which he answers, that *if some, wilfully shutting the eyes of their minds, will not receive the beams of this light, it is not from the nature of light that those remain still in darkness, but from the wickedness of*

Ἀκούσατε οὖν οἱ μακρὰν· ἀκούσατε οἱ ἐγγύς· οὐκ ἀπεκρύβη πᾶσι ὁ λόγος· φῶς ἐστὶ κοινὸν, ὅπλάμπει πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις· οὐδεὶς Κιμμέριος ἐν λόγῳ. Clem. Alex. *Protrep.*

Hear ye that are far: hear ye that are near: the word is not hid to any: 'tis a common light; it shineth to all men; there is no Cimmerian to the word.

Nunquid non medicus idcirco proponit in publico, ut omnes se ostendat velle salvare si velint. Ambr. I. Tim. 2.

* *Venit* —*ut vulnera nostra curaret, sed quia non omnes medicinam expetunt, sed plerique refugiunt, nè medicamentis compungatur vis ulcerũ, ideò volentes, &c.* Ambr. *de* David. 3. 11.

Patet omnibus fons vitæ, neque ab jure potandi quisquam prohibetur, ut pellitur. Arnob. *lib.* 2.

Ὅταν τὴ εἰσόδε πᾶσιν ἀνεωγμένης, κὴ μηδενὸς τὸ κωλύοντος ὄντος, ἐθελοκακήσαντες τινες ἔξω μένωσι, παρ' ἑαυτὰ ἕστηκεν, ἀλλ' ἢ ἑαυτῷ τὴν οἰκείαν πονηρίαν ἀπόλλυσι. Chrys. *in* 1 Joh. *homil.* 7.

Εἰ φωτίζει πάντα ἄνθρωπον ἐρχόμενον εἰς τὸν κόσμον, πῶς ἀφόητοι μεμενήκασι πολλοὶ· ὃ γὰρ δὴ πάντες ἐπέγνωσαν τὸ Χριστὸ τὸ σέβας· πῶς ἐν φωτίζει πάντα ἄνθρωπον; τόγε εἰς αὐτὸν ἦκον· εἰ δέ τινες ὀκνήσαντες τὰς τῆ διανοίας ὀφθαλμὰς μύσαντες ἐκ ἐθέλησαν ἀπολαβέσθαι τὸ φωτὸς τότε τὰς ἀκτῖνα, ἐ τῆ τὸ φωτὸς φύσιν ἡ σκότωσις ἐκείνοις, ἀλλὰ τῆ τὴν κακερζίαν ἣν ἔχουσι ἀποστερήσαντες ἑαυτὰς τὸ

of those who wilfully deprive themselves of the gift of it, &c.

δωρεᾶς· ἡ μὲν γὰρ χάρις εἰς πάντας ἐκτέχυται —— πάντως ὁμοίως προσεσκεμμένη, καὶ μὴ τὴν ἴσην καλοῦσα τιμῆς· οἱ δὲ μὴ θέλοντες ἀπολαῦσαι τὴν δωρεᾶς ταύτης, ἑαυτοῖς δίκαιοι ταύτην ἂν εἶεν λογίσασθαι τῷ πόρωσιν. Chryſ. *in* Joh. 1. *homil.* 7.

Myſticus Sol ille juſtitiæ omnibus ortus eſt, omnibus venit, omnibus paſſus eſt & omnibus reſurrexit—ſi quis autem non credit in Chriſtum, generali beneficio ſe fraudat, ut ſi quis clauſis feneſtris radios ſolis excludat, non ideò Sol non ortus eſt omnibus, &c. Amb. *in* Pſal. 118. *Ser* 8.

Si dies omnibus æqualiter naſcitur, & ſi Sol ſuper omnes pari & æquali luce diffunditur, quanto magis Chriſtus Sol & dies verus, in Eccleſia ſua lumen vitæ æternæ pari æqualitate largitur? Cypr. *Ep.* 76.

St. *Gregory Nazianzen* reſembles the grace of Baptiſm (as to its community and freedom of uſe) to the breathing of the air, to the ſpreading of light, to the viciſſitude of ſeaſons, to the aſpect of the creation; things moſt obvious and common to all.

——ὡς ἀέρι πνεῦσιν, ὡς φωτὸς χύσιν, καὶ ὡρῶν ἀλλαγὰς, καὶ κτίσεως θέαν—— Naz. *Orat.* 40.

If this anſwer do not fully ſatisfie, I adjoin farther,

2. That God beſide that ordinary proviſion is ready to interpoſe extraordinarily in diſcloſing his truth to them who are worthy of ſuch favour and fit to receive it: and that God's general deſire and deſign of revealing his truth to all men is very well conſiſtent with his providential (not onely negative and permiſſive, but even poſitive and active) withholding the diſcovery thereof from ſome perſons, yea ſome Nations; for that neither his wiſedom, goodneſs, or juſtice might permit him, that he ſhould impart that revelation to ſuch perſons whom he ſeeth altogether indiſpoſed to comply therewith, and unfit to profit thereby; who have extremely abuſed the leſſer graces and not improved or miſ-improved the leſſer talents afforded them; detained inferiour truths in unrighteouſneſs, and *have not liked to retain God in their knowledge*, have therefore juſtly been delivered up to a reprobate ſenſe; who have ſo depraved their minds with wicked prejudices and affections, that the truth being offered to them, they would certainly either ſtupidly neglect it, or ſcornfully reject it, (or if admitting it in ſhew) would unworthily abuſe it; ſo that from the imparting the means of knowing it, no glory to God, no benefit to man would accrue, but rather contempt of God, and prejudice to men would enſue upon it: there are ſome perſons of that wicked and *Gigantick* diſpoſition (contracted by evil practice) that ſhould one offer to inſtruct them in truth, or move them to piety, would be ready to ſay with *Polyphemus* in *Homer*: Rom. 1. 18. 28. Iſa. 30. 10.

Νήπιός εἶ ὦ ξεῖνε, ἢ τηλόθεν εἰλήλουθας,
Ὅς με θεοὺς κέλεαι ἢ δείδιμεν, ἢ ἀλέασθαι· Odyſſ. 1.

Friend, you are a fool, or a great ſtranger to me,
who adviſeſt me to fear or regard the Deity.

Or (which is the ſame) with *Pharaoh*: *Who is the Lord, that I ſhould obey his voice? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Iſrael go*, (or neither will I doe as you in God's name admoniſh me) who like that unhappy Prince, by no efficacy of arguments, no wonders of power are to be convinced of their folly, or converted from their wickedneſs: ſome, like thoſe of *Chorazin* and *Bethſaida*, whom not all the powerfull diſcourſes ſpoken to them, all the mighty works done in them, ſufficient to have brought *Tyre* and *Sidon* to repentance) can induce to mind or obey the truth: unto which ſort of people (except upon ſome particular occaſions, and for ſpecial reaſons) it is not expedient that divine truth ſhould be expoſed. We may alſo obſerve how our Lord being asked by St. *Jude* a queſtion like to ours; *Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifeſt thy ſelf unto us, and not to the world?* thus reſolves it; *If a man love me he will keep my words, and* Exod. 5. 2. Prov. 1. 24. Luke 11. 33. Joh. 14. 22.

my

my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him: implying the ordinary reason of God's making a difference in the discoveries of himself to be the previous disposition and behaviours of men toward God; and interpretatively toward our Lord himself.

That God doth commonly observe this method (plainly suitable to divine justice, wisedom and goodness) to dispense the revelation of his truth according to mens disposition to receive it, and aptness to make a fruit-
Matt. 3. 8. full and worthy use of it, *to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance*, as
1 Cor. 12. 7. Saint *John Baptist* spake; and to withhold it from those who are indispos'd to admit it, or unfit to profit by it: we may from divers express passages and notable instances (beside many probable intimations) of *Scripture* learn. We may on the one hand observe, that those whom our Saviour did chuse to call, were persons disposed easily upon his call to comply:
Matt. 4. 18. to forsake their Fathers, and their nets; to leave their receipts of custome;
Joh. 1. 24, 37. Matt. 19. 27. to relinquish all (relations, occupations, estates) and to follow him; faith-
Luke 19. 8, 9. John 1. 47. full *Israelites*, without guile, like *Nathanael* (that is, as is probably con-
Luke 19. 8, 9. Matt. 21. 31. jectured St. *Bartholomew*) men honestly devout, and charitable, like *Zacheus*; that he chose to converse with publicans and sinners, men apt to
Luke 5. 31. be convinced of their errours, and touched with the sense of their sins; apt to see their need of mercy and grace, and therefore ready to entertain the overtures of them: that he blesses God for revealing his mysteries to babes (to innocent and well-meaning, imprejudicate and uncorrupted persons) such as if men were not, they could in no-wise enter into the
Matt. 18. 3. Kingdom of heaven, or become Christians; those *poor in spirit, of whom is*
19. 14. 5. 3. *the Kingdom of heaven*; those *foolish things* which God chuses as most fit
1 Cor. 1. 27. objects of his mercy and grace: that he enjoyn'd his Disciples, in their travels for the promulgation and propagation of the Gospel, to inquire concerning the worthiness or fitness of persons, and accordingly to make
Matt. 10. 11. more close applications to them: (*Into what City or Village ye enter, enquire who therein is worthy*; and entring in abide there) of this proceeding we have a notable instance in *Cornelius*, who for his honest piety (correspondent to the proportion of knowledge vouchsafed him) was so acceptable to God, that in regard thereto he obtained from him the revelation of truth in a peculiar and extraordinary manner. And St. *Paul* was another most remarkable example thereof; who for the like reason was so wonderfully called, as himself intimates, describing himself to have been
Acts 22. 3. ζηλωτὴς θεοῦ, *zealously affected toward God*; *according to the righteousness in*
23. 1. Phil. 3. 6. *the law, blameless*; one that had *continually* * *behaved himself with all good*
* Πεπολίτευμαι. *conscience toward God*; who even in the persecution of God's truth did proceed with an honest meaning and according to his conscience, for which
Acts 26. 9. Gal. 1. 14. cause he saith, that God had mercy on him; foreseeing how willingly he
Acts 26. would embrace the truth, and how earnestly promote it: we may also ob-
1 Tim. 1. 3. serve, how in the *Acts* of the *Apostles*, *the Holy Spirit* commonly directed the *Apostles* to such places, where a competent number of people were
Luke 9. 62. well disposed to receive the truth; who were εὖ διάθοι εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ
Acts 13. 48. θεοῦ, *well-disposed to the Kingdom of heaven*, and consequently by God's
17. 11. foresight, (τεταγμένοι εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον) *ordained to have the word of eter-*
28. 28. *nal* life (the τὸ σωτήριον τοῦ θεοῦ, as it is in a parallel place called) discovered to them; such people as the *Beræans*, men *ingenuous* and tractable; who consequenly entertained the word, μετὰ πάσης προθυμίας, with all promptitude and alacrity. To such persons God sometimes by extraordinary
Acts 18. 9. revelation directed the *Apostles* to preach; as to the *Corinthians*, in respect to whom, the Lord spake to St. *Paul* in a vision, saying, *Fear not,*

but

but speak and be not silent, for I am with thee, because ---- πολύς ἐστι μοι λαὸς, *there is for me much people in this City; much people*, whom I see disposed to comply with my truth. So in behalf of the *Macedonians*, ἀνήρ τις Μακεδών, *a certain man of Macedonia* was in a vision seen to St. *Paul, exhorting him and saying, Passing into Macedonia help us:* thus on that hand doth God take special care that his truth be manifested to such, as are fitly qualified to embrace it and use it well: thus is God ready to make good that answer of *Pothinus* (Bishop of *Lions*, and immediate successour to St. *Irenæus*) to the *Prefect*, who asking him *who was the Christians God*, was answered, ἐὰν ἧς ἄξιος γνώσῃ, *If thou be worthy, thou shalt know*; thus (as the *Wise-man* divinely saith) the divine wisedom, ἀξίους ἑαυτῆς περιέρχεται ζητοῦσα, *Goeth about seeking such as are worthy of her; sheweth her self favourable unto them in their ways, and meeteth them in every thought.*

Acts 16. 10. Euseb. *V.* 1. Sap. 6. 16.

And on the other hand, that God with-holds the special discoveries of his truth, upon account of mens indispositions and demerits, may likewise very plainly appear. We may suppose our Lord to have observed himself, what he ordered to his Disciples; *Not to give that which is holy to dogs*, nor to cast their pearls before swine (not to expose the holy and pretious truth to very lewd and fierce people, who would snarl at it and trample upon it) we may allow God in his dispensation of his truth and grace to doe, what he bids the Apostles to doe: before he enters into any house, or applies himself to any person, to * examine whether the house or person be worthy; that is willing to receive him, and apt to treat him well; if not, to decline them. Our Lord we see did leave even his own Countrey, seeing men there were not disposed to use him with due honour and regard; seeing they were possessed with vain prejudices, apt to obstruct the efficacy of his divine instructions and miraculous performances; so that he was not likely (according to the ordinary way of divine providence) to produce any considerable effect towards their conversion. *He could not* (it is said) *doe many miracles there, because of their unbelief*; he could not, that is (according to the most just and wise rules he did observe, he would not doe them; because he perceived the doing them would not conduce to any good purpose; that they were not apt to look upon those works as the effects of divine power and goodness, performed for their benefit (for inducing them to faith and repentance) but rather that the doing them would expose God's mercy to contempt or reproach, at least to neglect or disregard. Hence our *Saviour* declined conversing with persons indisposed to (those ψυχικοὶ, who cannot δέχεσθαι τὰ τοῦ πνεύματος) receive benefit by his instruction and example; to grow wiser or better by his conversation; as the *Pharisees* and *Scribes*; men prepossessed with corrupt opinions and vitious affections, obstructive to the belief of his doctrine, and observance of his laws; and worldly persons; proud and self-conceited, crafty and deceitfull, covetous, ambitious and worldly men, incorrigibly tinctured with that φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς, *carnal wisedom and affection*; which *is enmity to God; so that it is not subject to the Law of God, nor can be*; inextricably engaged in the friendship of the World, which is enmity to God: To such men the Gospel would certainly be a scandal or a folly: they would never be able to relish or digest the doctrine of purity, self-denial, patience, and the like doctrines opposite to carnal sense and conceit which it teacheth. From such wise and prudent men (conceited of their little wisedoms, and doting upon their own fancies) God did conceal those heavenly mysteries; which they would have despised and derided: Those *many wise according to the flesh, many powerfull, many noble,*

Matt. 7. 6. Matt. 10. 11. * Ἐξετάζετε. Matt. 6. 5. 1 Cor. 2. 14. Matt. 21. 31. Rom. 8. 7. James 4. 4. 1 John 2. 15. 1 Cor. 1. 23. Matt. 11. 25. 1 Cor. 1. 26. James 2. 5.

noble, God did not chuſe to call into his Church: accordingly we may obſerve in the hiſtory of the Apoſtles, that God's Spirit did prohibit the Apoſtles paſſing through ſome places, it diſcerning how unſucceſsfull (at thoſe ſeaſons, in thoſe circumſtances, according to thoſe diſpoſitions of
Acts 16. 6. men) their preaching would be: *Paſſing through Phrygia and Galatia, being hindred by the Spirit to ſpeak the word in Aſia; coming to Myſia, they aſſayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit ſuffered them not.* Moreover there is plainly the like reaſon, why God ſhould with-hold his ſaving truth from ſome people, as why he ſhould withdraw it from others; when it is abuſed or proves fruitleſs: but of ſuch withdrawing we have many plain in-
Matt. 21. 43. ſtances, attended with the declaration of the reaſons of them, *Our Lord* propheſied thus concerning the *Jews*; *I ſay unto you, that the Kingdom of God ſhall be taken from you and ſhall be given to a nation doing the fruits thereof*; they when our Saviour would have gathered them under his
Matt. 10. 14. wings wilfully refuſing. *Our Lord* charged his Diſciples, when by any they were repulſed or neglected in their preaching, to leave thoſe perſons and places, *ſhaking off the duſt from their feet*, in token of an utter (εἰς μαρτύριον ἐπ' αὐτους)
Luke 9. 5. deteſtation and deſertion of them: and accordingly we
Acts 13. 52. ſee them practiſing in their Acts; when they perceived men perverſely
Acts 18. 6. contradictious, or deſperately ſenſeleſs and ſtupid, ſo that they clamoured againſt the Goſpel, and thruſt it from them, they abſtained from farther dealing with them, turning their endeavours other-where, toward perſons of a more docile and ingenuous temper; thence more ſuſceptive of Faith
Acts 13. 46. 28. 26. and repentance: *To you* (ſay *Paul and Barnabas* to the contradicting and reproachfull *Jews*) *it was neceſſary that the word of God ſhould firſt have been ſpoken, but ſeeing you put it from you* (*or thruſt it away from you*, ἀπωθεῖσθε αὐτὸν) *and judge your ſelves unworthy of everlaſting life, we turn to the*
Apoc. 2. 5. *Gentiles.* So when the Church of *Epheſus* was grown cold in charity, and deficient in good works, God threatens to remove her Candleſtick; or to withdraw from her that light of truth, which ſhone with ſo lit-
Καὶ γὰρ τὰς ὗς (φασὶ) τὸ μύρον πνίγει. Chryſ. tle beneficial influence. It ſeems evident that God for the like reaſons may with-hold the diſcovery of his truth, or forbear to interpoſe his pro-
John 3. 19. vidence, ſo as to tranſmit light thither, where mens deeds are ſo evil, that
2 Cor. 2. 16. they will love darkneſs rather than light, where their eyes are ſo dim and weak, that the light will but offend and by the having it hurt them; where they by the having it declared to them will onely incur farther miſchief and miſery; it would prove to them but ὀσμὴ θανάτου, a *deadly ſcent*, as the moſt comfortable perfumes are offenſive ſometimes and noxious to diſtempered bodies. Wherefore as where the light doth ſhine moſt clearly, it is mens voluntary pravity, that by it many are not effectually brought to ſalvation; ſo it is mens voluntary depraving and corrupting themſelves, (miſuſing their natural light, choaking the ſeeds of natural ingenuity, thwarting God's ſecret whiſpers and motions, complying with the ſuggeſtions of the wicked one) ſo as to be rendred unmeet for the ſuſception of God's heavenly truth and grace, which hinders God (who proceedeth ordinarily with men, in ſweet and reaſonable methods, not in way of impetuous violence and coaction) from diſpenſing them: we may ſay of ſuch
Iſa. 66. 3. in the words of the Prophet, *They have choſen their own ways, and their ſoul*
Jer. 5. 25. *delighteth in their abominations: Your iniquities have turned away theſe things,*
Baſ. *in* Pſ. 33. *and your ſins have with-holden good things from you.* Τῇ ἑαυτοῦ ἀγαθότητι πᾶσιν ὁ θεὸς ἐγγίζει· μακρύνομεν δὲ ἑαυτοὺς ἡμεῖς διὰ τὰς ἁμαρτίας, *God doth by his goodneſs approach to all, but we ſet our ſelves at diſtance by ſin,* ſaith St. *Baſil*; and, ὅπου αὐτοπροαιρέτου πονηρία, ἐκεῖ καὶ ἀποχὴ τῆς χάριτος, *where there*

there is self-chosen, or affected wickedness, there is a with-holding of grace; saith another *Father* (*apud* Cyrill Hier.) The *Gospel, if it be hidden,* 'tis (as St. *Paul* says) *hidden* ἐν τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις, *in viris perditis, among lost men* (that is men desperately gone in wickedness, incorrigible, unreclaimable people) *in whom the God of this world* (that is as St. *Chrysostome* expounds it, not the Devil, but the good God himself) *hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, so that the light of the glorious Gospel hath not shined to them* (πῶς ἂν ἐτύφλωσεν; how then did God blind them? saith St. *Chrysostome*) οὐκ ἐνεργήσας εἰς τοῦτο, ἄπαγε· *not by any efficacy of his upon them toward that; fy on that:* ἀλλ' ἀφεὶς καὶ συγχωρήσας, *but by permission and concession*; for so the *Scripture* is wont to speak: Ἐπειδὴν γὰρ αὐτοὶ ἠπίστησαν πρῶτοι, καὶ ἀναξίους ἑαυτοὺς κατεσκεύασαν τοῦ ἰδεῖν τὰ μυστήρια, καὶ αὐτὸς λοιπὸν εἴασεν· ἀλλά τι ἔδει ποιῆσαι; πρὸς βίαν ἕλκειν, καὶ ἀνακαλύπτειν μὴ βουλομένοις ἰδεῖν; ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον ἂν κατεφρόνησαν, καὶ οὐκ ἂν εἶδον· *Seeing* (saith he) *they disbelieved first, and constituted themselves unworthy to see the mysteries, even God at last let them alone; for what should he have done? should he have drawn them violently, and discovered it to them being unwilling to see? they would then have more despised it and not have seen it.* God is ever willing and ready to dispense his mercies and favours, but he is not wont to doe it extraordinarily (or beside the course of his ordinary provision) but in a proper and fit season; (in that καιρὸς εὐπρόσδεκτος, *acceptable time and day of salvation*, when he seeth men capable of receiving them) which season commonly dependeth upon man's will and choice, or the results of them. Καθόλου γὰρ ὁ Θεὸς οἶδεν τάς τε ἀξίας τῆς ἀγαθῶν, καὶ μή· ὅθεν τὰ προσήκοντα ἑκάστοις δίδωσιν. Σωτὴρ γάρ ἐστιν οὐχὶ τῆς μὲν· τῆς δὲ· πρὸς δὲ ὅσον ὑπιλθεινότητος ἕκας τος εἶχεν, τοῦτο ἑαυτὸν διένειμεν εὐεργετῶν· for (saith *Clemens Alex.* in his 7th of the *Stromata*, where he clearly and fully affirms our present doctrine) *Our Lord is not the Saviour of some, and not of others: but according as men are fitly disposed, he hath distributed his beneficence to all.* St. *Augustine* himself somewhere speaketh no less; or rather more: *Præcedit aliquid in peccatoribus* (saith he) *quo quamvis nondum sint justificati, digni efficiantur justificatione; & idem præcedit in aliis peccatoribus quo digni sint obtusione.* But,

Luke 19. 44. 2 Cor. 6. 2. Rom. 13. 11.

'Εις τὸ μὴ αὐγάσαι αὐτοῖς. Chrys. *in* 2 Cor. 4. 4.

Clem. *Strom. VII. p.* 105.

Quæst. 68, & *Quæst.* 83. *Tom. IV. Part 1.*

Venit de occultissimis meritis, &c. Ibid.

3. If all these considerations do not thoroughly satisfie us concerning the reason of God's proceedings in this case, we may consider that God's providence is inscrutable and impenetrable to us; that (according to the *Psalmist*) as *God's mercy is in the heavens, and his faithfulness reacheth to the clouds*; so *his righteousness is like the great mountains* (too high for our reason to climb) *and his judgments,* πολλὴ ἄβυσσος, a great abyss, too deep for our feeble understanding to fathom; that his ways are more subtile and spiritual than to be traced by our dim and gross sight. So upon contemplation of a like case, although, as it seems, hardly so obscure or unaccomptable as this, (the case concerning God's conditional rejection of that people, whom he in a special manner had so much and so long favoured) St. *Paul* himself doth profess. That therefore although we cannot fully resolve the difficulty, we notwithstanding without distrust should adhere to those positive and plain declarations, whereby God representeth himself seriously designing and earnestly desiring, *that all men should come to the knowledge of the truth; that none should perish, but that all should come to repentance*; not doubting but his declared mind, and his secret providence, although we cannot thoroughly discern or explain their consistency, do yet really and fully conspire. But no farther at this time.

Psal. 36. 6.

Rom. 11. 33.

2 Pet. 3. 9.

SERMON XLII.

The Doctrine of Universal Redemption asserted and explain'd.

1 TIM. IV. 10.

——The living God; who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.

8. AS our *Saviour* was such to all men by his doctrine, or the general discovery of all saving truth; so may he be esteemed such in regard to his exemplary practice; whereby upon the open stage of the world and in the common view of all that would attend unto him He did represent a living pattern of all goodness; by imitating which, we may certainly attain salvation. He that will consider his practice shall find it admirably fitted for general instruction and imitation; calculated for all places and all sorts of people; suted to the complexions, to the capacities, to the degrees, to the callings of all men; so that every sort of men may from it draw profitable direction, may in it find a Copy even of his particular behaviour: for He was a great Prince, illustrious in birth, excellent in glory, and abounding in all wealth, yet was born in obscurity, lived without pomp, and seemed to possess nothing; so teaching men of high rank to be sober, mild and humble, not to rest in, not to regard much, not to hug and cling to the accommodations and shews of worldly state; teaching those of mean degree to be patient, content and chearfull in their station. He was exceedingly wise and knowing, without bound or measure; yet made no ostentation of extraordinary knowledge; of sharp wit, of deep subtilty; did not vent high, dark or intricate notions; had in his practice no reaches and windings of craft or policy; but was in his doctrine very plain and intelligible, in his practice very open and clear; so that what he commonly said or did, not onely Philosophers and Statesmen, but almost the simplest idiots might easily comprehend; so that those might thence learn not to be conceited of their superfluous wisedom; these not to be discouraged in their harmless ignorance; both having thence an equally sufficient instruction in all true righteousness, a complete direction in the paths to happiness, being thereby σοφιζόμενοι εἰς σωτηρίαν, made wise and learned to salvation. He did not immerse himself in the cares, nor engage himself into the businesses of this World; yet did not writhdraw himself from the company and conversation of men: he retired often from the crowd, that he might converse with God and heavenly things; he put himself into it, that he might

2 Tim. 3. 15.

might impart good to men, and benefit the World, declining no ſort of ſociety; but indifferently converſing with all; diſputing with the Doctors and eating with the *Publicans*; whence thereby both men of contemplative and quiet diſpoſitions or vocations, and men of buſie ſpirits, or of active lives may be guided reſpectively; thoſe not to be moroſe, ſupercilious, rigid, contemptuous toward other men; theſe not to be ſo poſſeſſed or entangled with the World, as not to reſerve ſome leiſure for the culture of their minds, not to employ ſome care upon the duty of piety and devotion; both may learn whether in private retirements or in publick converſation and employment eſpecially to regard the ſervice of God and the benefit of men; thus was the example of our Lord accommodated for all men; eſpecially conducting them in the hardeſt and rougheſt parts of the way leading to bliſs, the acclivities and aſperities of duty; ſelf-denial, or neglect of worldly glory and fleſhly pleaſure, patience, humility, general charity; ſhewing us the poſſibility of performing ſuch duties, and encouraging us thereto. Through theſe difficult and dangerous paſſages (as a reſolute Chieftain of life) he undauntedly marched before us, charging, beating back, and breaking through all oppoſite forces; all enemies, all temptations, all obſtacles; enduring painfully the moſt furious aſſaults of the World; boldly withſtanding and happily conquering the moſt malitious rage of Hell; ſo that victory and ſalvation we ſhall be certain of if we purſue his ſteps, and do not baſely (out of faintneſs or falſhood) deſert ſo good a leader; we ſhall not fail of the unfading Crown, if *with patience we run the race that is ſet before us, looking unto the Captain and perfectour of our faith, Jeſus who for the joy propoſed unto him, endured the croſs, deſpiſed the ſhame, and hath ſet down at the right hand of the throne of God.* Would it not raiſe and enflame any courage to ſee his Commander to adventure ſo boldly upon all hazards, to endure ſo willingly all hardſhips; whom would not the ſight of ſuch a * forerunner animate and quicken in his courſe; who by running in the ſtreight way of righteouſneſs, with alacrity and conſtancy, hath obtained himſelf a moſt glorious Crown, and holdeth forth another like thereto, for the reward of thoſe, who follow him. Now as our Lord's doctrine, ſo did his example, in the nature and deſign thereof, reſpect and appertain to all men, it being alſo like the light of Heaven, a common ſpectacle, a publick guide (*to guide our ſteps in the way of peace*) if it do not appear ſo, if it do not effectually direct all; it is by accident and beſide God's intention; 'tis by the fault of them who ſhould propound it, or of them who have not eyes fit, or worthy to behold it; briefly, what was ſaid concerning the univerſal revelation of Chriſtian doctrine may be applied to Chriſt's practice.

Ἀρχηγὸς ζωῆς. Acts 3. 15.
1 Pet. 2. 21. Heb. 12. 2. 1 Pet. 5. 4. Ἀμαράντινον τὸ δόξης στέφανον. —στέφανος ζωῆς. Apoc. 2. 10. Jac. 1. 12.
* Πρόδρομος. Heb. 6. 20.

9. *Jeſus* is the *Saviour of all men* as having combated and vanquiſhed all the enemies of man's welfare and happineſs; *diſpoſſeſſing* them of all their pretences and uſurpations over man, diſarming them of all their power and force againſt him; enabling us to withſtand and overcome them: Man's ſalvation hath many adverſaries of different nature and kind; ſome directly oppugning it, ſome formally prejudicing it, ſome accidentally hindring it; ſome alluring, ſome forcing, ſome diſcouraging from it, or from the means conducing to it; the chief of them we may from the Scripture (with conſent of experience) reckon to be the *Devil* with all his envy and malice, his uſurpations, his deluſions and his temptations to ſin; the *World* with its ſnares and baits; its violences, perſecutions, and menaces; the fleſh or natural concupiſcence, with its bad incli-

inclinations and propensities to evil, its lusts and pleasures; *Sin*, with its guilt, and mischievous consequences; the *Law* with its rigorous exactions, hard measure and harsh boding; *Conscience* with its accusations and complaints, its terrours and anguishes; *Divine anger* with its effects *Death* and *Hell*: all these *our Lord* hath in several and suitable ways defeated; as to their malignity, contrariety, or enmity in respect of man's salvation; he hath (as *Zachary* prophesieth, in his *Benedictus*) *Saved us from our enemies, and from the hands of all that hate us: So that being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we might* (ἀφόβως) *safely and securely, without danger or fear serve him, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life.*

——ὁ Χειρὸς ἐδίν τ ἰδίαι ποιήσως ἀφεσκαλέλιπε τῷ ἄρχονδι τὸ κέσμε τέτε. Athan. *contra* Apoll. *p.* 628.

Luke 1. 71, 74.

The *Devil* (that *enemy*, that *adversary*, that *accuser*, that *slanderer*, that *murtherer*, that *greedy Lion*, that *crafty Serpent*; the *strong one*, the *mischievous one*, the *destroyer*) who usurped an authority and exercised a domination over mankind, as *the Prince of this world*; who made prize of them, *captivated them at his pleasure*; who detained them under the power (or authority) of darkness and wickedness; who had the power of death; him our Saviour hath destroyed or defeated (καθήργησεν, as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* speaketh; that is, abolished him as to any farther pretence of empire or power over us) him he hath dejected from Heaven (*I saw Satan like lightning falling down from Heaven*) him *he hath cast out: Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the Prince of this world be cast out*; all *his works he hath dissolved*; *For this cause* (saith St. *John*) *the son of God did appear, that he might dissolve the works of the Devil.* He combated *this strong one* (this mighty and dreadfull foe of ours) and baffled him, and bound him, and disarmed him (taking away πανοπλίαν ἀυτῦ, *the whole armour* in which he trusted) and *spoiled him* (τὰ σκέυη διήρπασε, *rifled all his baggage*, bare away all his instruments of mischief) and plundered all his house; leaving him unable (without our fault, our baseness, our negligence) to doe us mischief; (as is intimated in the 12th of St. *Matthew*, and 11th of St. *Luke*) yea *he triumphed over* all those infernal principalities and powers, and exposed them (as St. *Paul* saith:) he imparted to his Disciples ability *to trample upon all his power*, by him all his followers are so fortified as *to conquer the wicked one* (as St. *John* says) he affordeth light to discover *all his wiles, and snares*; strength and courage *to withstand all his assaults, to repell all his fiery darts, to put him to flight.*

Matt. 13. 28. Luke 11. 19. 1 Pet. 5. 8. *Dragon*, Apoc. 12. 3, *&c.* Acts 10. 38. 1 John 2. 14. Apoc. 12. 9. John 12. 31. 16. 11. 14. 30. Ephes. 2. 2. 6. 12. 2 Cor. 4. 4. * Coloss. 1. 13. Acts 26. 18. Acts 10. 38. 2 Tim. 2. 26.

Heb. 2. 14.

Luke 10. 18.

John 12. 31. 16. 11.

1 John 3. 8.

Matt. 12. 29. Luke 11. 21.

Coloss. 2. 15.

ἐδειγμάτισεν, Luke 10. 19. 1 John 2. 14. Eph. 6. 11. 2 Chr. 2. 11. Eph. 6. 16. 1 Pet. 5. 9. Eph. 4. 27. Jam. 4. 7.

The *World* also (that is, the wicked principles, the bad customs, the naughty conversation and example which commonly prevail here among men; alluring to evil and deterring from good; the cares also, the riches, the pleasures, the glories of the world, which possess or distract the minds, satiate and cloy the desires, employ all the affections and endeavours; take up the time of men; all in the world which fasteneth our hearts to earth, and to these low transitory things; or which sink them down toward hell; and which detain them from soaring toward heaven) is an enemy; an irreconcileable enemy to our salvation; the friendship thereof being inconsistent with a friendship in us toward the God of our salvation; or in him toward us: for *the friendship of the world is enmity with God*; and, *If any man love the world, the friendship of the father is not in him.* And this enemy our Lord hath vanquished, and

Jom. 4. 4.

1 John 2. 15.

and enabled us to overcome. *Be of courage* (saith he) *I have overcome the world*; *he*, by a constant self-denial and temperance, defeated the bewitching pleasures, and flattering glories of it; *he*, by an immovable patience, baffled the terrible frowns, and outrageous violences of it; *he*, bya resolute and invincible maintenance of truth, in great measure routed and dissipated the errours and oppositions thereof; *he*, by a general and intense charity, surmounted the provocations, envies and enmities thereof: *he* did it himself for us, and *he* also enabled us to doe it; furnishing us with sufficient strength, and fit weapons whereby we may combat and conquer it; may sustain and repell its force; may shun and elude its baits; for, *every one that* (by faith in him) *is born of God doth overcome the world: and this is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith: Who is he that overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?* In all these things (that is in whatever concerns the world and its enmity; *tribulation*, or *distress*, or *persecution*, or *famine*, or *nakedness*, or *peril*, or *sword*) *we are* (saith St. *Paul*) *more than conquerours through him that loves us*; *thanks be to God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ*: Our Lord hath procured for us hopes that will raise our minds and affections above the world; objects employing our care and endeavour far beyond it; satisfactions that will chear our hearts, and satiate our desires without it; comforts, that will support and sustain our spirits against all the terrours, all the assaults, all the evils thereof; by his means it is, that we have no reason either to love it, or to fear it, or to value it, or to be concerned about it; but to contemn it as a thing unworthy of us and below us. John 16. 33. 1 John 5. 4. Rom. 8. 38. 2 Cor. 2. 14. Phil. 1. 28.

The *Flesh* also (that is, all that within us of bodily temper, or natural constitution, which inclineth and swayeth us to vitious excess in sensual enjoyments; which disposeth us to the inordinate love of our selves and of other creatures; which *lusts against the spirit*, and is adversary thereto; which blindeth and darkneth our minds in the apprehension of or judgment concerning divine things; which perverteth and disableth (enfeebleth) our wills in the choice and prosecution of what is good; which discomposeth and disordereth the affections and passions of our soul; which continually enticeth and seduceth us to sin) is also an enemy; a very powerfull, very treacherous, very dangerous and very mischievous enemy to us and our welfare; rendring us enemies to God (for *the carnal mind is enmity against God*; *for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be*,) being *another law in our members, warring against the law of our mind, and captivating us to the law of sin*; engendring and fostering those *fleshly lusts, which war against the soul*; whose works and fruits are all sorts of intemperance, impurity, pride, envy, contentiousness; this capital enemy of ours *our Lord* did in his own person first subdue, rejecting all the suggestions and thwarting the impulses thereof; entirely submitting to and performing the will of God; even in willingly drinking that cup, which was so distastfull, so grievous to natural will and fleshly desire. He so conquered the flesh in himself for us; he also conquers it in us, by the guidance and assistence of his grace enabling us to withstand it, and to overcome it. *The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus* (saith St. *Paul*) *hath freed me from the law of sin and death.* He infuses a light discussing those foggs which steam from carnal sense and appetite; so that we may clearly discern divine truths, the will of God, the way to happiness; he inserteth principles of spiritual life and strength counterpoising Gal. 5. 24. 1 Cor. 2. 14. Matt. 26. 41. Gal. 5. 17. Rom. 7. 18, 19. Jam. 1. 14. Rom. 8. 7. Rom. 7. 23. 1 Pet. 2. 11. Gal. 5. 19. 1 Cor. 3. 3. Col. 3. 5. Luke 22. 42. Matt. 26. 39. John 17. 19. Heb. 2. 10. Rom. 8. 2. 2 Cor. 4. 6. 1 Cor. 2. 15. 1 John 2. 27. Eph. 5. 8. Rom. 12. 2. 1 John 5. 3.

ſing and overſwaying corporeal and ſenſual propenſions; ſo that we can reſtrain ſenſual deſires, and compoſe irregular paſſions; and ſubmit readily to God's will; and obſerve chearfully God's law; and freely comply with the dictates of the Spirit or of right reaſon; he ſo continually aideth, encourageth and upholds us, that we *can do all things through Chriſt that ſtrengtheneth* us; ſo that by his power and help *the fleſh with its affections and luſts are crucified*; the *earthly members are mortified*; *the old man (which was corrupted according to deceitfull luſts) is put off*; *the body of ſin is ſo deſtroyed, that henceforth we ſhould not ſerve ſin*; *ſin doth not reign in our mortal bodies, ſo that we* (muſt) *obey it in the luſts thereof*; *we are renewed in the ſpirit of our minds*; and *do put on the new man, which is created according to God in righteouſneſs and true holineſs.*

Phil. 2. 13. Phil. 4. 13. 2 Cor. 3. 5. Heb. 13. 21. Gal. 5. 24. Coloſſ. 3. 5. 2. 11. Eph. 4. 22. Rom. 6. 6, 12. Rom. 8. 13. Heb. 12. 1. Eph. 4. 23. 2. 10. Coloſſ. 3. 10.

Our *Sins* alſo are very grievous enemies of ours, loading us with heavy guilt, ſtinging us with bitter remorſe, and anxious fear, keeping us under miſerable bondage, expoſing us to extreme miſchief and miſery; them our Lord hath alſo routed and vanquiſhed: in regard to this performance was that name *Jeſus* aſſigned to him; as the *Angel* told *Joſeph*: *She ſhall bear a Son, and thou ſhalt call his name Jeſus, for he ſhall ſave his people from their ſins*: [*From their ſins*; taking in all the cauſes and the conſequences of them; from all thoſe ſpiritual enemies, which draw us, or drive us into them; from the guilt and obnoxiouſneſs to puniſhment; the terrour and anguiſh of conſcience; the wrath and diſpleaſure of God following upon them; the ſlavery under their dominion; the final condemnation and ſufferance of grievous pains for them;] the guilt of ſin he particularly freed us from; for *he loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins in his own bloud.* Chriſt died for ſinners (for us then being ſinners) that is, that he might deliver us from our ſins, with all their cauſes, adjuncts and conſequences. *He bare our ſins on his own body on the tree*; *the bloud of Chriſt cleanſeth us from all ſin*: *he is the propitiation for our ſins, and for the ſins of the whole world*; *he was manifeſted to take away our ſins*; *once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away ſin* (εἰς ἀθέτησιν ἁμαρτίας, *to the abolition of ſin*) *by the ſacrifice of himſelf*; we are *juſtified freely by God's grace, through the redemption that is in Chriſt Jeſus*; *by his obedience many are conſtituted righteous* (or free from the guilt and imputation of ſin) he *juſtifies the ungodly*; *covering their ſins* and *not imputing them unto them.* So doth he wipe away the guilt of ſin; and he voids the condemnation paſſed for them; for *there is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus*; *who is there that can condemn, ſince Chriſt hath died, or rather hath riſen again?*

Heb. 12. 4. Πρὸς ἁμαρτίαν ἀνταγωνιζόμενοι. Matt. 1. 21.

Ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν τῷ γένει τῶν ἀνθρώπων διὰ τὸ ἰδίᾳ παθεῖν πλεῖστα ἀπέδωκε τὴν σωτηρίαν, ἵνα ὅλον τὸν ἄνθρωπον τὸ ἁμαρτίας ἐνεχόμενον πάσης ἁμαρτίας ἐλευθερώσῃ. Damaſus *Epiſt. apud* Theod. 5. 9. 1 Tim. 1. 15.

Rev. 1. 5. 1 Pet. 1. 19. 1 Pet. 2. 24. 3. 18. 1 John 1. 7. 2. 2. 3. 5. 4. 10. Heb. 1. 3. 9. 26, 28. Rom. 3. 24. Rom. 5. 19. Rom. 4. 5, 6, 7. Rom. 8. 1. Rom. 8. 34.

He hath alſo appeaſed God's wrath for ſin, and removed the effects of it, (the puniſhment and vengeance due to ſin and threatned for it.) So that *being enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son*; *being juſtified by faith we have peace with God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*: *Jeſus* is the ὁ ῥυόμενος, *who delivers us from the wrath to come*; *being juſtified by his bloud, we ſhall be ſaved by him from wrath.*

Rom. 5. 10. 1. 1 Theſſ. 1. 10. Rom. 5. 7.

The ſtrength and dominion of ſin he hath alſo broken; by the grace afforded us, whereby we are able to reſiſt and avoid it; ſo that *ſin henceforth ſhall not domineer over us, or reign in our mortal body*: *Being freed from ſin we are enſlaved to righteouſneſs and made ſervants to God. The body of ſin is deſtroyed ſo that we no longer ſerve ſin* — Whence conſequently he hath ſubdued, utterly weakned, or quite deſtroyed (as to any force or miſchievous

Rom. 6. 14. Rom. 6. 12. Rom. 6. 18, 22. Rom. 6. 6.

vous influence upon us) those other adversaries, which depend upon sin, and by its power oppose and afflict us.

Our *Conscience* is such an enemy accusing us, condemning us, vexing us with the memory and sense of sin; suggesting to us the depth of our guilt and the danger of our state, terrifying us with the expectation of punishment and vengeance: but *our Lord* (by securing us of mercy and favour upon repentance and sincere obedience) hath silenced and stilled this *adversary*; hath *by his bloud* (as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* says) *purged our conscience from dead works; hath delivered them, who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage*; so that thence we obtain a steady peace of mind, a joyfull satisfaction in the service of God, a comfortable hope of future bliss: *peace, comfort* and *joy* are the adjuncts of that state he shall put us into, and the fruits of that Spirit he bestoweth on us. Heb. 9. 14. 2. 15. Rom. 15. 13. Rom. 14. 17. Gal 5. 22.

The *Law* also (in its rigour, as requiring exact obedience, and as denouncing vengeance to them who in any point violate it;) is, by reason of our weakness and inability so perfectly to observe it, an enemy to us; justifying no man, perfecting no man, causing, encreasing, aggravating, *quickening, declaring* sin; *yielding occasion to sin of killing us, working wrath, ministring death and condemnation, subjecting us to a curse* (as St. *Paul* teacheth us) but our Lord by mitigating and abating the extreme rigour thereof, by procuring an acceptance of sincere (though not accurate) obedience, by purchasing and dispensing pardon for transgression thereof upon repentance, by conferring competent strength and ability to perform it in an acceptable degree, hath brought under this adversary; hath *redeemed us from the curse of the law*; hath *justified and imputed righteousness to us without the works of the law* (without such punctual performances, as the Law exacts) we are *delivered from the law* (as to those effects of it; the condemning, discouraging, enslaving us) we cease to be under the law (in those respects) being under grace, being led by the Spirit (as St. *Paul* tells us.) The Law indeed is still our rule, our guide, our governour; we are obliged to follow and obey it; but it ceases to be a tyrant over us, a tormentour of us. Gal. 2. 16. 3. 11. Heb. 7. 19. Rom. 10. 5. Rom. 8. 3. Rom. 3. 20. Gal. 3. 12. 5. 3. Rom. 7. 13. Rom. 4. 15. 3. 20. 5. 20. 7. 7, 8, 10, 11. 1 Cor. 15. 56. 2 Cor. 3. 7, 9. Gal. 3. 12. Gal. 3. 13. Rom. 3. 21. 28. Rom. 4. 6. Rom. 7. 6, 4. Rom. 6. 14. Gal. 5. 18.

Death is also an enemy (*the last enemy*, saith St. *Paul*, *which shall be destroyed, is death*;) the enemy, which naturally we most fear and abominate; that which would utterly destroy us. 1 Cor. 15. 26. Acts 2. 24. 1 Cor. 15. 20. Acts 26. 23.

This enemy our Lord hath vanquished and destroyed: by his death and resurrection he opened the way to a happy immortality; *he abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel: He* by his *death defeated him that had the power of death; and delivered them, who by fear of death were through their whole life subject to bondage*; he pulled out sin, which is the sting of death, and reversed the sentence of condemnation, to which we all stood obnoxious. *The wages of sin* (that which we had deserved, and was by law due to us for it) *was death*; *but the gift of God is everlasting life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.* Col. 1. 18. Apoc. 1. 5. Acts 3. 15. Ἀρχηγὸς ζωῆς. 2 Tim. 1. 10. Heb. 2. 14. Rom. 6. 23.

Lastly *Hell*, (that is *utter darkness*, extreme discomfort, intolerable and endless misery) the most dismal of all enemies, our Lord hath, by the virtue of his merits, and the power of his grace, put us into a capacity of avoiding; *he hath* (as St. *Paul* before told us) *delivered us from the wrath to come. O Hell, where is thy victory? Death and Hell shall be cast into the lake of fire.* 1 Thess. 1. 10. 1 Cor. 15. 55. Apoc. 20. 14.

Thus hath *our Lord* in our behalf vanquished and defeated every thing that is opposite, or prejudicial to our salvation and welfare. Many in-

deed of theſe things do in a more immediate, more peculiar, and more ſignal manner concern the faithfull members of the the *Chriſtian Church*, and are directly applied to them, yet all of them in ſome ſort, according to God's deſign, and in reſpect to a remote capacity, may be referred to *all men*. They are benefits which God intended for *all men*, and which *all men* (if they be not faulty and wanting to themſelves) may obtain. How they more eſpecially appertain to the faithfull we may ſhew afterward.

Application.

1. Hence ariſeth great matter and cauſe of glorifying God; both from the thing it ſelf, and its extent: for the magnitude of beneficence is to be eſtimated not onely according to the degree of quality, but according to its amplitude of object; to redeem any doth ſignify goodneſs, to redeem many doth encreaſe it, to redeem all doth advance it to the higheſt pitch; the more are obliged, the greater is the glory due to the benefactour.

Hence the *earth being full of the goodneſs of the Lord, the Lord being gratious unto all, and his mercy being over all his works*, all creatures partaking of God's bounty is ſo often inſiſted upon in thoſe divine hymns, as a ground of praiſe to God.

Some do indeed ſpeak of glorifying God for his diſcriminating grace; as if grace the narrower it were, the better it were: but is not ſelfiſhneſs and envy at the bottom of this? Is not this the diſpoſition of thoſe in the *Goſpel*, who *murmured ---- is thine eye evil, becauſe mine is good?*

It is dangerous to reſtrain God's benevolence and beneficence within bounds narrower than they really are; thereby diminiſhing his glory.

2. Hereby is diſcovered the general obligation of men to love God; to praiſe him, to ſerve him in ſenſe of his goodneſs, in regard to his beneficence, out of gratitude toward him. If God hath been ſo kindly affected toward men, and ſo carefull of their welfare, as for procuring and promoting their ſalvation to provide a *Saviour* for them, to deſign his own beloved ſon to that performance, in proſecution thereof depreſſing him into ſo low a ſtate, expoſing him to ſuch inconveniences and indignities, ſuch croſſes and afflictions, how much are then all men obliged to love him, as their gratious friend and benefactour; to praiſe and celebrate him for his favour and mercy, to render all bleſſings and thanks unto him? this certainly is the duty of all, if the redemption in God's deſign reach to all; otherwiſe in reality it lieth on few, in practice it could ſcarce touch any. They cannot be obliged to thank God for their redemption, who are not obliged to him for the thing it ſelf; They cannot heartily reſent the kindneſs, who are not aſſured that it extends to them: And to ſuch aſſurance (according to the doctrine of particular redemption) it is certain that very few men, eſpecially of the beſt men, can arrive; it is a queſtion whether any men arrive thereto.

Apoc. 5. 9. Eph. 1. 6. Col. 1. 12.

According to the ſenſe of all men it is alſo no eaſie thing to know certainly, whether a man at preſent be in the ſtate of grace: and he that doth not know that, cannot (except upon the ſcore of general redemption) be aſſured that he is redeemed; and therefore cannot thank God.

It hath been the common doctrine of *Chriſtendom* for 15 hundred years together, that no man (without a ſpecial revelation) can in this life be aſſured

aſſured of his perſeverance, and conſequently not of his ſalvation; and conſequently not of his election or redemption, in caſe onely they who are ſaved are in the deſign of God redeemed: no man therefore without that ſpecial revelation, can thank God heartily for his redemption, as being uncertain thereof, it being a ſecret reſerved in God's breaſt.

It is yet a farther difficulty, ſuppoſing a man to have a good aſſurance of his preſent ſtate, to be aſſured of his final perſeverance in it; which he that hath not, cannot (except upon the ſaid ſcore) thank God for it.

The beſt men eſpecially, who out of modeſty and humility are apt to doubt of their preſent ſtate; who ſtudying their hearts and diſcovering many imperfections in themſelves, who reflecting on their lives, and obſerving in them many defects, are apt to queſtion whether they are qualified for God's favour, or fitted for the future accompt and enjoyment of heaven, who conſidering the treachery of their hearts, the feebleneſs of their reaſon, that unſteadineſs of their reſolution, will be apt to fear they may fall away, will be rendred hence uncapable to render God thanks for their redemption: onely the bold and blind Bayards (who uſually out of ſelf-conceit are ſo exceedingly confident of their election and ſalvation) will be able to praiſe God for it.

Hence the aſſurance of ſalvation hapning to few, and of them to much fewer upon good grounds; it being neceſſary to none, it being perhaps (yet far more probably, according to the general ſenſe of *Chriſtendom*) groundleſs to any; few or none are capable to render God praiſe and thanks for it: ſo ſhall he loſe in effect all thanks for the greateſt benefit he did ever confer on mankind.

It is therefore a dangerous opinion, which checketh their gratitude, which ſtoppeth their mouths from praiſing God; which ſo depriveth God of his due praiſe. It is much more ſafe to praiſe God for the benefits we conceive we have, but have not, than to neglect to praiſe him, for that we have.

3. This doctrine doth afford great matter of comfort: if a man reflecting on his own heart and ways (obſerving in them many blemiſhes and defects) is apt to be diſcouraged, yet it will raiſe him to conſider that he is not thereby excluded from a poſſibility of ſalvation, ſeeing he is aſſured of God's favourable inclination, and who hath expreſſed ſo much goodwill and favour toward him in his redemption, ſeeing he is perſuaded that he hath a Saviour ſo kindly and pitifully affected toward him; who wiſheth him well; who is concerned in his ſalvation, that he might not be croſſed or defeated in his deſigns, that he might not loſe the effects of his endeavours, the price of his bloud. But he that ſeeth himſelf in ſo doubtfull a condition, as to his own qualifications, and withall hath no aſſurance that God was ever gratiouſly diſpoſed toward him, cannot but thereby be much diſcouraged.

This doctrine therefore is ſafe and uſefull, it can doe no man harm, it may doe him great good by giving him hopes of being aſſiſted and accepted by his Redeemer. But the other is dangerous, as tending to diſcourage and deject men.

4. This doctrine is a great incitement to the performance of duty; both as working upon mens ingenuity, and diſpoſing them in gratitude to ſerve God, from the reſentment of their obligation for ſo great a favour; and as aſſuring them of acceptance in caſe of endeavour to obey. How can

he but be moved willingly to serve God, who hath an apprehension of God's such mercifull design to save him? of his having done so much in order thereto?

But how can he be moved to serve God in consideration of such a benefit, who is ignorant of its being intended him? how can any man apply himself chearfully to serve that master, whose favourable inclination toward him, whose readiness to accept his service he doubteth of.

1 Cor. 6. 20. 1 Pet. 1. 17. The *Apostles* propound it as a ground of gratitude, and an obligation to the performance of duty, that they are redeemed by Christ; which supposeth they do all know and believe it.

Supposing Christ is not the redeemer of all but of those onely, who shall be finally saved, these grounds of thankfullness and enforcements of duty cannot properly or pertinently respect all Christians, and indeed onely those who are sure of their salvation.

My thanking Christ for his redeeming me, my diligently serving him as my redeemer, supposeth my opinion, and is grounded upon the truth of his being really so: ------ I cannot heartily, confidently or comfortably doe it, except I know it, and am assured thereof: which I cannot doe except Christ died for all men, or that I am assured of my particular election.

So that either Christ is an universal Saviour, or the greatest part of Christians are disobliged and incapacitated reasonably to thank him, to praise him, to serve him, as they are enjoined to doe.

5. It is a great aggravation of Infidelity, of Apostasie, of all disobedience, that we are guilty of them, do frustrate the designs and undertakings of Christ, do reject the overtures of his grace, do abuse the goodness and mercy of their redeemer; it consequently deterreth from those things.

Luke 7. 30. *The Pharisees and Lawyers rejected the counsel of God toward them,* (God therefore designed their good.)

Heb. 2. 3. *How shall we escape, that neglect so great salvation?* a salvation which they were capable of, which was designed for them, which was offered to them; otherwise there would have been no danger in neglecting it, no fault in doing it.

Acts 13. 26, 46. It is said of the *Jews* at *Antioch* in *Pisidia*, that *they did*, ἀπωθεῖσθαι, *thrust away the Gospel* (*the word of salvation*, that was sent them) *judging themselves unworthy of eternal life:* God did think fit out of goodness seriously to offer it to them, but they did not think fit to embrace it.

2 Pet. 3. 9. Rom. 2. 23. *Despisest thou the riches of God's goodness?* how can any man despise that, which doth not concern him, which never was offered him, which at least he hath no ground of confidence, that it extendeth to him?

John 5. 34, 38. *These things I speak that ye may be saved:* so *our Lord* saith to those ----*who did not believe in him.*

Matt. 23. 37. *How often have I willed*, &c.

2 Pet. 2. 1. *Denying the Lord that bought them.*

6. It is a great encouragement and excitement to devotion. Who can be backward of having recourse to his Redeemer; or of using his mediation? whom will not such an experiment of goodness invite and encourage?

But the contrary apprehension must needs damp devotion, and discourage from it. He can apply himself to God but faintly, and distrustfully, who distrusteth whether he hath any Redeemer or Mediatour or no. Who must

must thus conceive and say to himself: perhaps God hath loved me, and perhaps he never had nor will have any regard to my welfare. Perhaps *Christ* died with intention to doe me good, perhaps he never did mean any such thing: perhaps those expressions of kindness sounding so generally do not include me, perhaps I am excluded, and onely deluded by them. When a man cannot say to *Christ*, O my Saviour ---- O my Mediatour, *&c.* nor use his intercession with God for the procurement of faith, of grace, of any good thing.

7. It is a ground and motive of charity; there arising thence a more considerable relation between all men; being all the objects of *Christ's* love and mercy, should endear men to one another; it rendereth every man valuable in our eyes, as dear and pretious in God's sight. It should make his salvation desireable to us.

Pray for all men, saith St. *Paul.*

The contrary opinion removeth this ground of charity; and so cooleth it.

8. It should consequently render us carefull to promote the salvation of others, and fearfull to hinder it by ill example, by ill doctrine, by any misbehaviour. So doth St. *Paul* argue, when he saith, *Destroyest thou him for whom Christ died?*

9. It is a piece of justice to acknowledge the right and interest of every man in his Saviour.

A wrong to exclude any; to confine and appropriate this great blessing; to engross, to enclose a Common; to restrain that by forging distinctions, which is so unlimitedly expressed.

The undertakings and performances of our Saviour did respect all men as the common works of nature do; as the air we breathe in, as the Sun which shineth on us; the which are not given to any man particularly, but to all generally; not as a proper Inclosure, but as a Common ---- they are indeed mine, but not otherwise than as they do belong to all men.

A gift they are to all equally, though they do not prove to all a blessing; there being no common gift, which by the refusal, neglect, or ill use of it may not prove a curse ---- *a savour of death.*

SER-

SERMON XLIII.

The Nativity of our Lord tidings of great Joy.

LUKE II. 10.

Ἰδὺ γὰρ εὐαγγελίζομαι ὑμῖν χαρὰν μεγάλην, ἥτις ἔσται παντὶ τῷ λαῷ.

And the Angel ſaid unto them, Fear not, for Behold, I bring you tidings of great joy, which ſhall be to all people.

THE proper buſineſs of a *Feſtival* is ſpiritual joy, conceived in our hearts, by reflexion on ſome notable bleſſing conferred on us; accompanied with a gratefull ſenſe and expreſſion, anſwerable to the ſpecial bounty and mercy of God, in due proportion to the nature and degree of that bleſſing.

1 Theſſ. 5. 16. Rom. 12. 12. Phil. 4. 4.

Such joy is a duty, or a part of religious devotion, required by God, and very acceptable to him; for as God would have his ſervants perpetually content, well ſatisfied, and chearfull in all ſtates, and upon all occurrences; ſo he doth eſpecially demand from us, that we ſhould entertain his favours with delight and complacence; it being proper, it being ſeemly, it being juſt ſo to doe; for ſince joy is a natural reſult of our obtaining whatever we do apprehend good, or eſteem and affect; the conception of it is a plain argument, that we do well underſtand, do rightly prize, do cordially like, do thankfully embrace God's favours; as on the contrary a defect of it doth imply, that we do not mind them, or take them to be little worth, that we do not ſenſibly reliſh them, or accept them kindly. And if ever we are obliged, if ever we are concerned ſo to rejoice, then ſurely it is now; when the faireſt occaſion, and higheſt cauſe of joy, that ever was, is preſented to us; when certain news from heaven, and the beſt that ever came from thence, of the moſt admirable, the moſt glorious, the moſt beneficial event, that ever happened in the world, is in a manner ſutably rare conveyed to us; for *Behold*, ſaith the *Angel, I bring you tidings of great joy, which ſhall be to all people.*

Upon which *Words* (each whereof is emphatical, and pregnant with matter obſervable) we ſhall firſt make a brief deſcant, or paraphraſe, ſupplying the room of a curious *Analyſis*; then we ſhall urge the main duty couched in them.

Ἰδὺ, *Behold:* this is a word denoting *admiration*, exciting *attention*, intimating aſſurance: *Behold* and *admire*; it is no mean, no ordinary matter, that I report, but a moſt remarkable, a very marvellous event: *Behold*, and *attend*; it is a buſineſs not to be paſſed over with ſmall regard, but moſt worthy your conſideration, of high moment, and concernment,

to

to you. *Behold*, and *ſee*; 'tis no uncertain, no obſcure thing; but that whereof you may be fully aſſured, as if it were moſt evient to your ſenſe, and which by conſpicuous proofs ſhall be demonſtrated; in the mean while you have no ſlight authority for it; for

Εὐαγγελίζομαι, *I bring good tidings*: *I*, an *Angel*, a ſpecial Meſſenger of God, purpoſely ſent on this errand, that by the ſtrangeneſs of my apparition I may excite you to regard it, by the weight of my teſtimony I may incline you to believe it; by the dignity of my nature I may declare the importance of it: *I*, a faithfull ſervant of God, and a kind friend to men, very willing at his command to perform good offices to them, do bring a meſſage, well becoming an Angel's mouth, worth my deſcent from heaven, and putting on this viſible ſhape; for *I bring*

Εὐαγ. χαρὰν μεγάλην, *good tidings of great joy*: I bring *tidings*, that may gratifie the curioſity of any man, the mind of man naturally being greedy of news; *good tidings*, thoſe are welcome to all men, and apt to yield more pleaſure, than any knowledge we had before: tidings *of joy*; ſuch as may not onely miniſter a dry ſatisfaction to your reaſon, but ſenſibly touch your affections, by the comfortable nature, and beneficial tendency of them: tidings of *great joy*; as not touching any indifferent or petty buſineſs, but affairs of neareſt concernment, and higheſt conſequence to you: (ſuch indeed, as you ſhall underſtand, which do concern not the poor intereſts of this world, not the ſorry pleaſures of ſenſe, not any ſlender advantage of your preſent life, and temporal ſtate; but your ſpiritual welfare, your everlaſting condition, the future joy and happineſs of your ſouls) *tidings* indeed the moſt gladſome, that ever ſounded upon earth, that ever entred into mortal ear; theſe *I bring*

Ὑμῖν, *to you*: to you *ſhepherds*; perſons of mean condition, and ſimple capacity, leading this innocent and humble ſort of life, employed in your honeſt vocation, undergoing toilſome labour, and ſore hardſhip; witneſs the open field, witneſs the cold ſeaſon, witneſs the dark night in which I find you watching, and guarding your ſheep; to you, who could expect no very welcome tidings; who are little concerned in any great tranſactions; and can have ſmall ambition or hope of bettering your condition by any changes here; even to you (not in the firſt place to the mighty *Princes*, to the crafty *Stateſmen*, to the ſage *Philoſophers*, or learned *Rabbies*, to the wealthy *Merchants*, or fine *Citizens*, who now are warm in their houſes, enjoying their eaſe and pleaſure; repoſing on their beds, or ſitting by their fires, or revelling at their banquets and ſports; but to you) poor, harmleſs, ſilly, induſtrious ſouls, who well may repreſent the greater and better part of mankind, in this ſurpriſing and abſolute free way, the gratious Lord of heaven by me his ſpecial miniſter doth vouchſafe to ſend from thence *tidings of great joy*; which ſhall be

Pauperibus atque vigilantibus, &c. Bern. *de Nat. Serm.* 5. Luke 2. 8.

Παντὶ τῷ λαῷ, *to all people*; or rather to all *the people*; that is to God's ancient and peculiar people, in regard to which it is ſaid, *I was not ſent but to the loſt ſheep of the houſe of Iſrael*; to *that* people I ſay eſpecially, primarily, and more immediately this joy did appertain; it by a cloſer relation to God, and ſpecial intereſt in his promiſes having plaineſt title thereto; it from anticipations of knowledge, faith and hope being more capable to admit ſuch an overture; it indeed being the repreſentative of all the ſpiritual *Iſrael*, or faithfull ſeed of *Abraham*, for whom the benefits which theſe tidings import were deſigned; to it firſt indeed, but mediately and conſequentially to all people diſperſed on the face of the

Matt. 15. 24. 10. 6. Rom. 9. 4. Luke 24. 47. Acts 13. 46. Iſa. 2. 3. Zech. 9. 9. Rom. 9. 4.

the earth: The expreſſion ſeemeth adapted to the preſent conceits of that Nation, which apprehended nothing about God's favourable intentions to the community of men; but in effect it is to be underſtood extenſively in reference to all people: for the *Saviour*, the *Chriſt*, the *Lord*, of whom this good news did report, was not onely to be the Redeemer, and Governour of that ſmall people, but of the World, of every Nation, of all mankind: Here indeed we have παντὶ τῷ λαῷ, *to all the people*; but in
Luke 2. 31. the *nunc dimittis* of old *Simeon*, we have πάντων τῶν λαῶν, *of all the peoples*; *Mine eyes* (ſaid he) *have ſeen thy ſalvation, which thou haſt prepared before the face of all the peoples:* As he was *the glory of his people*
Luke 2. 32. *Iſrael*; as in him *God did viſit and redeem that his people*; ſo he was
1. 68. *made a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be for ſalvation to the utter-*
Acts 13. 47. *moſt ends of the earth*; He was *the expectation of Iſrael*; but he was like-
Iſa. 49. 6. 42. 6. wiſe *the deſire of all nations*; He was deſtin'd *to rule in Sion*; but *the*
Luke 2. 38. *Heathen* alſo *were given for his inheritance, and the uttermoſt parts of the*
Hag. 2. 7. *earth for his poſſeſſion*; He was *the root of Jeſſe, which ſhould ſtand for an*
Pſal. 2. 8. *enſign of the people, to which the Gentiles ſhould ſeek*; He was that *Royal*
Mic. 5. 2. *perſon*, of whom the *Pſalmiſt* did ſing, *Men ſhall be bleſſed in him, all na-*
Iſa. 11. 10. *tions ſhall call him bleſſed.*
Pſal. 72. 17.

He was to be born by Nation a *Jew*, but a man by nature; *the Son of man*, was a ſtyle which he commonly did own, and affect no leſs, than the *Son of Abraham*, or of *David*; he was *born* indeed *under the*
Gal. 4. 4. *law*, but *of a woman*; and therefore brother to us all, as *partaker of the*
Heb. 2. 14.--- *ſame fleſh and bloud*; Hence was he endewed with an humane compaſſion, and with a fraternal affection toward all men; hence was he diſpoſed to extend the benefit of his charitable and gratious performances unto them all.

Judæa therefore muſt not engroſs this angelical Goſpel; it is of importance moſt univerſal and unlimited, reaching through all ſucceſſions of time, and all extenſions of place; filling all ages and all regions of the
Rom. 15. 10. world, with matter, and with obligation of joy: Hence even by *Moſes*
Deut. 32. 43. anciently (according to St. *Paul*'s interpretation) were all nations upon this accompt invited to a common joy; *Rejoyce*, ſaid he, *O ye nations with his people.* Hence, in foreſight of this event, the Holy *Pſalmiſt* (as the *Fathers* expound him) did ſing, *The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice, let the multitude of Iſles be glad thereof:* Hence *Sing, O thou barren, thou that didſt not bear, break forth into ſinging and cry aloud, thou that didſt not travel with child----The wilderneſs and the ſolitary place ſhall be glad, the deſart ſhall rejoice and bloſſom as the roſe---- Sing unto the Lord a new ſong, and his praiſe from the end of the earth,* ſaid the *Evangelical Prophet* in regard to this diſpenſation; In fine, this *Angel* himſelf did interpret his own words, when in conſort with the hea-
Luke 2. 14. venly *Choire* he ſang that *Antheme, Glory be to God in the higheſt; on earth peace, and good-will toward men*; whence we may collect that a peace diffuſed over the earth, and a good-will extended toward all men were implied in theſe *tidings of great joy to all people.*

Pſal. 97. 1. 96. 1.
Τῷ σωτῆρα τὸν σωτῆρος ὀπφάνειαν προλέγει. Theodor.
Totum ad Chriſtum revocemus, ſi volumus iter rectæ intelligentiæ tenere. Aug. *in* Pſ. 96. 7.
Iſa. 54. 1. 35. 1. 42. 10.

We then are all concerned in theſe *tidings*, and we may look on them as by this heavenly *Evangeliſt* imparted to us; whence our duty muſt be to liſten with reverent attention unto them, ſeriouſly to weigh the purport of them, diligently to contemplate the reaſons of that great joy, which effectually ſhould be produced in us by them, as their proper and due

reſult;

reſult; to further which practice, let us take ſome proſpect of this *Goſpel*, whereby it may appear pleaſant, and apt to kindle a ſprightly joy in our hearts. The matter of it, is the *Nativity* of our *ever bleſſed Lord*, and *Saviour Chriſt Jeſus*; for, *To you*, ſaith our *Angel*, *is born this day a Saviour, who is Chriſt the Lord*, an occurence fraught with all the greateſt cauſes of joy imaginable; as importing innumerable, unexpreſſibly and unconceivably vaſt advantages thence ſpringing to us.

It doth miniſter occaſion of rejoicing for all the bleſſings which did flow from each of his ſalutary undertakings and performances; for all the mercies purchaſed by the merits of his obedience, and by the price of his bloud; for all the graces iſſuing from his diſpenſation of the *Holy Spirit*; for all the benefits conſequent on his illuſtrious reſurrection, aſcenſion and glorification; as being a good entrance to them, yea, a great progreſs in them, and a certain pledge of their full accompliſhment; for all the work of our redemption was in a manner atchieved, when our Saviour did appear; His incarnation was the great ſtep toward it; as being an act of the humbleſt obedience, and of the higheſt merit, that could any-wiſe be performed, for ſatisfying the juſtice of God, and winning his favour toward us: His *taking up life* may well ſeem more meritorious, than his *laying it down*, and the chief paſſion which he could ever undergo; His death was a paſſion, great as death could be; His life alſo was a continual paſſion, or exerciſe of huge patience; but his birth ſeemeth to be the greateſt and ſtrangeſt paſſion of all; involving the loweſt ſubmiſſion, and the deepeſt ſuffering: What nobler ſacrifice could there be, than God's offering himſelf up to mortality, to infirmity, to ſlavery? What obedience can be thought of comparable to that which he did expreſs when he ſaid, *Lo I come to doe thy will, O God: I came down, not that I might doe my own will, but the will of him that ſent me?* for him to deſcend from heaven, the region of light and bliſs, into this gloomy and ſad world, for him in a manner to deveſt himſelf of celeſtial Majeſty, and to aſſume the form of a ſervant; for him to be encloſed in a womb, and to come out wailing thence, to ſuck at a breaſt for life, to be carried in arms, and laid in a manner; to enter on a ſtage of *Being* ſo very low and homely; for him, I ſay, *the Lord of glory*, thus *to empty*, and *abaſe* himſelf, may not this reaſonably be deemed more, than after his becoming man to ſuſtain all the grievances incident to our nature and ſtate? whence *the very aſſumption of fleſh was* (ſaith St. *Athanaſius*) *the redemption of all mankind:* He was at leaſt thence engaged in the way of acting and ſuffering what-ever was needfull for our recovery; and having gone ſo far, aſſuredly he never would flinch or recoil, but would go through with all; being come, he would ſhew himſelf come to purpoſe, leaving no part unfiniſhed of his grand deſign.

Heb. 10. 7. John 6. 38.

Phil. 2. 7, 8.
Ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν, ἑαυτὸν ἐταπείνωσεν.

Ἡ προσληψις τ σαρκὸς ἀλυτρίωσις ἦν πάσης τ ἀνθρωπίνης. Ath. Or. 3. c. Arr. p. 385. vid. p. 618.

Λύχνον ἦλθε τλῶ ἑαυτῦ σάρκα, &c. Greg. Naz. Or. 38.

Creatoris ad creaturam deſcenſio credentium eſt ad æterna provectio. Leo M. de Nat. Serm. 5.

So that as they, who celebrate the birth of a Prince, do mean thereby to expreſs their joy for all the good which they do hopefully preſume to enjoy from his protection and conduct afterward in all his life; and as they who welcome the Sun-riſing, do imply their ſatisfaction in the conveniences of his light through the whole enſuing day; ſo may the *Nativity* of our *Lord* afford matter of rejoicing for all the train of mighty bleſſings which do ſucceed it. We may therefore now well conſider him born to inſtruct us by his excellent doctrine, and to guide us by his perfect example;

ample; born to merit God's mercy and favour toward us by an entire ſubmiſſion to God's pleaſure; in the whole conduct of his life, and in the final reſignation of it; born to renew and ſanctifie our nature, to ſupport and ſtrengthen us in obedience to God's cummandments, to ſuccour us in temptations, to comfort us in diſtreſſes by his grace; born to rear himſelf from the grave for confirming our faith, and enſuring our hopes of ſalvation; born to aſcend up above all the heavens to God's right hand, there effectually to intercede for us, thence liberally to diſpenſe all heavenly bleſſings to us: Well may we now rejoice, as ſeeing him come to diſcloſe the way of happineſs, to eſtabliſh the covenant of grace, to void all the obſtructions, and ſubdue all the enemies to our welfare: well may we celebrate this *birth*, as by its virtue bleſſing the *Patriarchs*, enlightning the *Prophets*, inſpiring the *Martyrs* with faith and courage, endewing all the *Saints*, that e'er have been, with grace, and crowning them with glory; ſo that in this *Day* we have the *Paſſion*, the *Paſch*, the *Aſcenſion*, the *Pentecoſt*, the *Memorials* of every *Saint* ſuggeſted to us; the joys of all our *Feſtivals* do conſpire or commence in this; which is the head and ſpring, which is the fruitfull ſeed, which is the hopefull morning of them all.

Οὐκοῦν ἡ τὰ τῶ Πάσχα καλὰ σήμ πρὸ τὴν χθὲς εὐφημιῶν μιᾷ & ὄζει. Greg. Nyſſ.

Greg. Nyſſ. Tom. 2. p. 784. Πάντα ταῦτα ἡ παρέσης ἡμέρας χάρις ὄζει· αὕτη γὰρ ἤρξη τῆς ἑρεξῆς ἀγαθῶν. *All theſe things* (ſaith St. *Gregory Nyſſene*) *are the grace of this preſent day, for it began the goods, which did in order ſucceed.*

But waving the numberleſs benefits ſo conſequent on the *Nativity*, we ſhall onely touch ſome of thoſe which have a more formal and cloſe relation thereto.

I paſs over the contemplation of that ſweet harmony between the old, and the new World; in which, to our comfortable ſatisfaction, the ſweeteſt attribuutes of God (his goodneſs, his wiſedom, his fidelity and conſtancy) do illuſtrate themſelves, by completion of the ancient promiſes, prefigurations and predictions touching this event.

I forbear alſo to reflect on the happy alteration and amendment of the World, which our Lord's coming did induce, by comparing the ſtate of things before it, with that which followed it; the conſideration of which caſe is very pleaſant, and productive of joy. *Firſt* then,

Sapientia & benignitas Dei ac ſalutiferi operis mora capaciores nos ſuæ vocationis effecit, ut quod multis ſignis, multis vocibus, multíſque myſteriis per tot fuerat ſeculà pronunciatum, in his diebus Evangelii non eſſet ambiguum, &c. Leo P. *de Nat. Serm.* 3.

1. Let us conſider, that the *Nativity* doth import the completion of many ancient promiſes, predictions and prefigurations concerning it; that whereas all former diſpenſations of favour and mercy were as preludes or preambles to this; the *Old Law* did aim to repreſent it in its myſterious pomps; the chief of providential occurrences did intimate it; the Prophets often in their myſtical raptures did allude to it, and often in clear terms did expreſs it; the gratious deſigns of God, and the longing expectations of mankind being ſo variouſly implied in regard thereto; now all is come to be fulfilled, and perfected in moſt clear, moſt effectual, moſt ſubſtantial accompliſhment: Now is ſprung up that *ſeed of the woman*, which according to the firſt *Goſpel* preached to *Adam*, ſhould *bruiſe the ſerpent's head*; Now is the myſtical *Iſaac*, the miraculous *Son of promiſe* born; Now is that grant to *Abraham*, *In thy ſeed ſhall all nations of the earth be bleſſed*, made good; Now is *Shiloh come*, of whom *Jacob* foreboded, *unto him the gatherings of the people ſhall be*; Now is that *Oracle* of *Moſes* more than verified, *A Prophet ſhall the Lord your God raiſe up unto you of your brethren, like to me, him ſhall ye hear*; Now *the ſtar is come out of Jacob*, The viſion whereof dazled *Balaam*, and ſtopped him from curſing that people, in which it ſhould ariſe;

Gen. 3. 15. 22. 18. Gal. 3. 8, 16. Gen. 49. 10. Deut. 18. 15. Acts 3. 22. 7. 37. Num. 24. 16.

Now

Now is that oath diſcharged, to *David*, *Of the fruit of thy body will I ſet upon thy throne*; Now thoſe illuſtrious predictions of *Iſay*, *There ſhall come forth a rod out of the ſtem of Jeſſe ---A Virgin ſhall conceive and bear a ſon; to us a child is born, to us a ſon is given, and the government ſhall be on his ſhoulders; There ſhall come out of Sion the deliverer, and ſhall turn ungodlineſs from Jacob*, are fully accompliſhed: *Now the righteous branch* (of which *Jeremy* and *Zachary* ſpake) is ſprouted forth; And *Ezekiel's One Shepherd*, *Daniel's Son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven*; *Micah's Ruler in Iſrael, whoſe goings forth have been from old*; *Haggay's Deſire of all Nations*; *Malachy's Angel of the Covenant*, and *Son of Righteouſneſs* have all in truth appeared: Now is that glorious *King* and *Captain* arrived, whom the *holy Oracles* do ſo magnificently deſcribe; whom *Moſes* and *Joſhua*, whom *David* and *Solomon* in ſo many pat circumſtances did foreſhadow; whom God would *ſet upon his holy hill of Sion*; *The ſceptre of whoſe Kingdom is a mighty ſceptre*; who ſhould *raiſe the tabernacle of David that is fallen*; *before whom all Kings ſhould fall down, and whom all nations ſhould ſerve*; who *ſhould reign over the houſe of Jacob for ever, and of whoſe Kingdom there ſhall be no end.*

Pſal. 132. 11. Luke 1. 33. Iſ. 11. 1. 7. 14. 9. 6. 59. 20. Rom. 11. 26. Jer. 22. 5. 33. 15. Zech. 3. 8. 6. 12. Ezek. 34. 23. 37. 25. Dan. 7. 13. Mic. 5. 2. Matt. 2. 6. Hag. 2. 7. Mal. 3. 1. 4. 2. Pſ. 2. 6. 45. 6. 72. 11. Acts 15. 16. Am. 9 11. Luke 1. 33. Dan. 7. 13. Mic. 4. 7. Aug. *in* Pſ. 96.

Now what can be more delightfull, or ſatisfactory to our mind, than to reflect on this ſweet harmony of things, this goodly correſpondence between the old, and new World; wherein ſo pregnant evidences of God's chief attributes (of his goodneſs, of his wiſedom, of his fidelity and conſtancy) all conſpiring to our benefit do ſhine? Is it not pleaſant to contemplate how provident God hath ever been for our welfare? what trains from the world's beginning, or ever ſince our unhappy fall he hath been laying to repair and reſtore us? how wiſely he hath ordered all diſpenſations with a convenient reference and tendency to this maſterpiece of grace? how ſteady he hath been in proſecuting his deſigns, and how faithfull in accompliſhing his promiſes concerning it?

Non itaque novo conſilio Deus rebus humanis, nec ſerâ miſeratione conſuluit, ſed à conſtitutione mundi unam eandémque omnibus cauſam ſalutis inſtituit. Leo *P. de Nat. Serm.* 3.

If the *holy Patriarchs did ſee this day, and were glad*; if a glimpſe thereof did cauſe their hearts * *to leap* within them; if its very dawn had on the Spirits of the *Prophets* ſo vigorous an influence; what comfort and complacence ſhould we feel in this its real preſence, and bright aſpect on us? how ſenſibly ſhould we be affected with this our happy advantage above them; the which our Lord himſelf then did teach us to eſtimate duly, when he ſaid, *Bleſſed are your eyes, for they ſee; and your ears, for they hear; for verily I ſay unto you, that many Prophets and righteous men have deſired to ſee thoſe things which ye ſee, and have not ſeen them; and to hear thoſe things which ye hear, and have not heard them.*

Joh. 8. 56.

* Ἠγαλλιάσατο.

Magnam enim jocunditatem tunc carpebant ipſi Sancti Prophetæ, cùm ea videbant in Spiritu, non jam impleta, ſed adhuc futura— Aug. *in* Pſ. 96.

Matt. 13. 16, 17.

2. Let us conſider what alteration our Lord's coming did induce, by comparing the ſtate of things before it to that which followed it. The old World then conſiſting of two parts, ſevered by a ſtrong wall of partition, made up of difference in opinion, in practice, in affection, together with a ſtrict prohibition to one of holding entercourſe with the other.

Eph. 2. 14. Acts 10. 28.

Of one, and that far the greater part, St. *Paul* hath given us theſe deſcriptions and characters; *They were aliens from the Commonwealth of Iſrael, and ſtrangers from the covenant, having no hope, and being without God in the world*; They were *by nature the children of wrath, and of diſobedience*; They were *dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, walking according to the courſe of this world, according to the Prince of the power of the air, the Spirit that worketh*

Eph. 2. 12. 2. 3. 2. 1.

Eph. 4. 17— *worketh in the children of diſobedience*; They did *walk in the vanity of their mind, having their underſtanding darkned, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that was in them, becauſe of the blindneſs of their heart; and being paſt feeling, did give themſelves over unto laſciviouſneſs, to* 2. 3. *work all uncleanneſs with greedineſs*; They *had their converſation in the luſts of the fleſh, fulfilling the deſires of the fleſh, and of the mind*; being *fooliſh, diſobedient, deceived, ſerving divers luſts and pleaſures, living in malice and envy, hatefull, and hating one another:* Such was the caſe the diſmally wretched caſe) of the *Gentile* world; ſuch were our foreſathers (ſuch after them of courſe, by fatal conſequence, ſhould we have been) They were in their minds blinded with groſs ignorance, and deluded with foul errours; they were in their wills and affections corrupted with great diſorder, perverſneſs, ſenſuality, malice; they did in their converſation practiſe all ſorts of impiety, iniquity and impurity; their conceptions of God were very unworthy, and their worſhip anſwerably ſuch (full of ſottiſh, ſavage, beaſtly ſuperſtitions) their principles were vain, and their life conformably diſſolute; in ſhort, they lived under the domination and influence of wicked Spirits; who thence are ſtyled *Lords* and *Princes of this world, of this air, of this ſecular darkneſs:* Even of the wiſeſt among them (the number of whom, notwithſtanding the clatter their writings made, was very ſmall and inconſiderable) of thoſe who by the conduct of natural light ſtrove to diſengage themſelves from vulgar miſtakes and miſcarriages, the caſe was little better; for even their minds after all their ſtudious diſquiſitions and debates) proved dark and giddy; full of ignorance, of errour, of doubt in regard to the main points of religion, and of morality; ſome of them flatly denying the exiſtence, or (which in effect is the ſame) the providence of God; the natural diſtinction between good and evil, the ſpiritual nature and future ſubſiſtence of our ſouls, the diſpenſation of rewards and puniſhments after this life; others wavering in doubt, or having but faint perſuaſions about theſe matters; few or none having clear notions, or ſteady opinions about any ſuch things; whence their practice, in correſpondence to their rules, muſt needs have been very looſe, or very lame; ſo that well might our Διαλογισμοῖς. *Apoſtle* ſay of them, *They became vain in their reaſonings, and their fooliſh* Rom. 1. 21— *heart was darkned; profeſſing themſelves wiſe, they became fools; And as they* 28. *did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to doe thoſe things which are not convenient.*

Tit. 3. 3. Col. 3. 7. (Eph. 5. 8. Col. 2. 13. 1 Cor. 6. 11. 2 Cor. 4. 4. 1 Theſſ. 4. 5. 1 Pet. 4. 3. Gal. 4. 8. Rom. 1. 29.)

Eph. 6. 12. 2. 2. (John 12. 31. 14. 30. 16. 11. 2 Cor. 4. 4. 2 Tim. 2. 16. Col. 1. 13. 2. 15. Acts 26. 18.)

As for the other part, or little parcel of men, the condition of that was alſo very low; if the reſt of the world did lie in dark night, they did live Col. 2. 17. but in a dusky twilight; their Religion was much wrapt up in ſhadow Heb. 8. 5. 10. 1. and myſtery; they had but dilute *Idea's* of God's nature, and ſcant diſcoveries of his will; their law or rule of practice, in divers reſpects was de- Rom. 8. 3. fective and infirm; they were lock'd under the diſcipline of childiſh rudi- Gal. 3. 21. ments, ſuting their raw capacities, and under the bondage of ſlaviſh yokes Heb. 7. 18, 19. befitting their ſtubborn diſpoſitions; which defailances in notion their practice commonly did out-ſtrip; being fond, corrupt, hypocritical, void of interiour, ſubſtantial and genuine righteouſneſs; as the old *Prophets* did often complain, and as our Lord, with his *Apoſtles*, did urge.

Such was the ſtate of the World in its parts, and jointly of the whole it Gal. 3. 22. may be ſaid, that it was *ſhut up under ſin* and guilt; under darkneſs and Rom. 11. 32. 3. 9, 19. weakneſs, under death and corruption, under ſorrow and woe: that no

full

full declaration of God's pleaſure, no clear overture of mercy, no expreſs grant of ſpiritual aid, no certain redemption from the filth, or the force of ſin, from the ſtroak of death, from due puniſhment hereafter; no encouragements ſutable to high devotion, or ſtrict vertue, were any-wiſe in a ſolemn way exhibited or diſpenſed before our *Lord*'s appearance: ſo that well might all men be then repreſented as *Cimmerians*, *ſitting in darkneſs, in the region and ſhadow of death*; well may we ſuppoſe all ages foregoing to have teemed with hope, and deſire of this happy day; or that (as St. *Paul* ſaith) *the whole creation* (that is, all mankind) *groneth together, and travelleth together untill now*; as labouring with pangs of implicit deſire, or under a painfull ſenſe of needing a *Saviour*; well might *Eſay* thus proclaim his coming; *Ariſe, ſhine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is riſen upon thee; for behold darkneſs ſhall cover the land, and groſs darkneſs the people; but the Lord ſhall ariſe upon thee, and his glory ſhall be ſeen upon thee, and the Gentiles ſhall come to thy light, and Kings to the brightneſs of thy riſing*: for, Now *the Lord hath made known his ſalvation, his righteouſneſs hath he openly ſhewed in the ſight of the heathen; The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth do ſee the ſalvation of our God.*

Iſa. 9. 1. Matt. 4. 15. Rom. 8. 22. Iſa. 60. 1. Pſal. 98. 2.

Now *we are all children of the light, and of the day*; all *do know God from the leaſt to the greateſt*; the rareſt, the deepeſt notions are grown common and obvious; every Child is inſtructed in the higheſt truths, every Peaſant is become a great Philoſopher, (beyond *Ariſtotle*, or *Plato*, or *Epictetus*) skilfull of the beſt knowledge, able to direct his life in the beſt way, capable of obtaining the beſt good.

1 Theſſ. 5. 5. (2 Cor. 3. 18. 4. 6.) Heb. 8. 11. Jer. 31. 33.

Now the Spirit of God (the ſpirit of direction, of ſuccour, of comfort ſpiritual) is powred upon all fleſh. *Now the grace of God, that bringeth ſalvation, hath appeared to all men*; fully inſtructing them in their duty, and ſtrongly enabling them to perform it, freely offering them mercy, mightily encouraging them with hopes of moſt bleſſed rewards.

Acts 2. 17. Joel 2. 16. Tit. 2. 11. Luke 24. 47.

Now *Jew* and *Gentile* are re-united and compacted in one body; walking in the ſame light, and under obligation to the ſame laws; ſharing in a common redemption and inheritance; being inſeparably linked together with the bands of faith, of charity, of ſpiritual fraternity; thus *old things are paſſed away, behold all things are become new*, in virtue and conſequence of our Lord's appearance: In contemplation of which ſo great, ſo general, ſo happy a change, how can we forbear to rejoice?

Eph. 3. 6. 2. 15. 2 Cor. 5. 17. Διόρθωσις. Heb. 9. 10.

But farther, that we may yet more nearly touch the point:

3. Let us conſider that the Nativity of our Lord is a grand inſtance, a pregnant evidence, a *rich* earneſt of Almighty God's very great affection and benignity toward mankind: for, *In this* (ſaith St. *John*) *the love of God was manifeſted, that God ſent his onely begotten ſon into the world*; and, *Through the tender mercies of our God* (ſang old *Zachary*) *the day ſpring from on high did viſit us*: This indeed is the peculiar experiment, wherein that moſt divine attribute did ſhew and ſignalize it ſelf. The power of God doth brightly ſhine in the creation, the wiſedom of God may clearly be diſcerned in the government of things; but the incarnation of God is that work, is that diſpenſation of grace, wherein the divine goodneſs doth moſt conſpicuouſly diſplay it ſelf: How indeed poſſibly could God have demonſtrated a greater exceſs of kindneſs toward us, than by thus for our ſake and good ſending his deareſt Son out of his boſom

1 John 4. 9. Joh. 3. 16, 17. Eph. 2. 4. Luke 1. 78.

Apparuerat antè potentia in rerum creatione, apparebat ſapientia in earum gubernatione, ſed benignitas miſericordiæ nunc maximè apparuit in humanitate. Bern. *de Nat. Serm.* 1.

Semper quidem diverſis modis, multiſque menſuris humano generi bonitas divina conſuluit, & plurima providentiæ ſuæ munera omnibus retrò ſeculis clemen-

ter impartiit; ſed in noviſſimis temporibus omnem abundantiam ſolitæ benignitatis exceſſit; quando in Chriſto ipſa ad peccatores miſericordia, ipſa ad errantes veritas, ipſa ad mortuos vita deſcendit, &c. P. Leo M. *de Nat. Serm.* 4.

ſom into this ſordid and ſervile eſtate, ſubjecting him to all the infirmities of our frail nature, expoſing him to the worſt inconveniencies of our low condition? what expreſſions can ſignifie, what compariſions can ſet out the ſtupendious vaſtneſs of this kindneſs? If we ſhould imagine, that a great Prince ſhould put his onely ſon (a ſon moſt lovely, and worthily moſt beloved) into rags, ſhould diſmiſs him from his Court, ſhould yield him up into the hardeſt ſlavery, merely to the intent, that he thereby might redeem from captivity the meaneſt and baſeſt of his ſubjects, how faint a reſemblance would this be of that immenſe goodneſs, of that incomparable mercy, which in this inſtance the King of all the World hath declared toward us his poor vaſſals, his indeed unworthy rebels?

(Pſal. 36. 6. 108. 4.)

And what greater reaſon of joy can there be, than ſuch an aſſurance of his love, on whoſe love all our good dependeth, in whoſe love all our felicity conſiſteth? what can be more delightfull than to view the face of our Almighty Lord ſo gratiouſly ſmiling on us?

Should we not be extremely glad, ſhould we not be proud, if our earthly Prince by any ſignal mark would expreſs himſelf kindly affected to us? how much more ſhould we reſent ſuch a teſtimony of God's favour; how worthily may our ſouls be tranſported with a ſenſe of ſuch affection?

4. We may conſider our Lord's nativity, as not onely expreſſing ſimple good-will, but implying a perfect reconciliation, a firm peace, a ſteady friendſhip eſtabliſhed between God and us: or that it did not onely proceed from love, but did alſo produce love to us. We did ſtand at a great diſtance, in eſtrangement, yea in enmity toward God; our firſt parents had by preſumptuous diſobedience revolted from him; and we inſiſting on the footſteps of their Apoſtaſie continued in *defiance of him*; *All men had ſinned, and fallen ſhort of the glory of God*; *There was not a righteous man upon earth, that did good, and ſinned not*; whence unavoidably the wrath of the moſt holy God was incenſed, the juſtice of the moſt righteous Lord was engaged againſt us; thence did iſſue a ſad doom, thence a juſt ſentence of capital puniſhment was denounced on us; no pretence of favour, no overture of peace, no hope of redreſs did then appear; we no-wiſe being able to expunge our guilt, to repair our offences, to recover out of that corruption in the mind and will, which did ſeal us up to ruine, indiſpoſing us either to find, or to entertain mercy; But our Lord's coming did appeaſe that anger, did mollifie that juſtice, did ſuſpend that condemnation, did cloſe the breach, and *ſlay the enmity*; *God* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaketh) *ſending his Son in the likeneſs of ſinfull fleſh, and for ſin, did condemn ſin in the fleſh*: for, how can God now avert his face from us, whom his onely dear Son hath vouchſafed to make and own for his brethren? how can he look with an eye of diſpleaſure on that nature, wherewith that Son of his love ſtandeth clothed before him? how can he abide offended with our race, in which pure innocence and perfect obedience are found; he now appearing with us, and for us, in whom not the ſtricteſt juſtice, nor the ſhrewdeſt malice can deſcry any fault or blemiſh; *in whom* therefore *God is* throughly *well-pleaſed*? Since we

Rom. 3. 24. 9. 23. Gal. 3. 22. Eccleſ. 7. 20.

Leo *de Nat. Serm.* 2.

Ἀδύνατον γένος τῇ φύσει λογικὴν ὕσῃ, καὶ ἑκουσίως ἁμαρτησάσῃ, καὶ ὑπὸ καταδίκην θανάτου γενομένῃ ἑαυτῶ ἀναλῦσαι εἰς ἐλευθερίαν. Ath. *p.* 638.

Ἀδύνατον ἑτέρως τὰ καθαρὸν καὶ ἀναμάρτητον ἐπ' ἀνθρωπίνης φύσεως ἐδεδέχθαι, εἰ μὴ θεὸς ἐν σαρκὶ πεφύκοιτο ἦν, ὁ τὸν ἀναμάρτητον δικαιοσύνην εἰς κόσμον εἰσαγαγών, &c. Ath. *de Incarn. Verbi.*

Eph. 2. 15, 16.

Rom. 8. 3. 2 Cor. 5. 19.

Τὸ τῦ Ἀδὰμ σύμπτωμα εἰς ἀσύγκριτον ἀνάσχημα χειρὸς ἀνεσήσατο, ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας ἀφθεὶς, καὶ κατακρίνας τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἐν τῇ σαρκί. Ath. *p.* 620.

Εἰ δὲ μὴ ἐν τῇ ἁμαρτησάσῃ φύσει ἡ ἀναμαρτησία ὤφθη, πῶς κατεκρίθη ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐν τῇ σαρκί. *Id. p.* 368.

(1 Pet. 1. 19. Heb. 7. 26.)
John 14. 30—ἐν ἐμοὶ οὐκ ἔχει οὐδέν.

we have *Emanuel, God with us, — God manifeſted in our fleſh, The Lord our righteouſneſs* partaker of our infirmity, interceſſour and advocate for his own fleſh and bloud, ready to doe and ſuffer whatever God pleaſeth to require on our behalf, how can God be againſt us? Shall God and man perſiſt at diſtance or diſaffection, who are ſo cloſely related, who are indeed ſo intimately united in one perſon? ſhall heaven and earth retain enmity, which have ſo kindly embraced, and kiſſed each other; ſince *truth hath ſprouted from the earth, and righteouſneſs hath looked down from heaven?* ſhall the war go on, when the great Mediatour and Umpire of peace is *come; preaching peace to them that are afar off and to them that are near?* Can death any longer reign over us, or our diſgrace and miſery continue, now that *the Prince of life, the Lord of glory, the Captain of ſalvation* doth appear for our relief?

John 19. 6. —ὐκ εὑρίσκω ἐν αὐτῷ αἰτίαν.
Matt. 3. 17. 1 Tim. 3. 16.
Jer. 23. 6. 33. 16.
Pſal. 85. 11.
Iſa. 9. 6.
Acts 10. 36.
Eph. 2. 17.
1 Cor. 2. 8.

Now then what can be more worthy of joy, than ſuch a bleſſed turn of affairs? how can we otherwiſe than with exceeding gladneſs ſolemnize ſuch a peace? a peace accorded with him, who in forces ſo infinitely doth overmatch us; who at his pleaſure can utterly quell us; who with the greateſt eaſe, with leſs than a word of his mouth, can daſh us to nothing, or hurl us down into an abyſs of remedileſs woe? How can we avoid being extremely ſatisfied at the recovery of his favour and friendſhip, which alone can be the foundation of our ſafety and welfare, which is the ſole fountain of all good, of all comfort, of all felicity?

5. Our Lord's nativity doth infer a great honour, and a high preferment to us: no-wiſe indeed could mankind be ſo dignified, or our nature ſo advanced as hereby: No wiſedom can deviſe a way beyond this, whereby God ſhould honour his moſt ſpecial favourites, or promote them to a nearneſs unto himſelf. For hence we become allied to God, in a moſt ſtrait affinity, his eternal Son being made our brother; hence as touching the bloud-royal of heaven we do in dignity o'er-top all the creation; ſo that what the *Pſalmiſt* uttered concerning man, is verified in the moſt comprehenſive ſence, *Thou haſt crowned him with glory and honour, and haſt ſet him over the works of thy hands; thou haſt put all things in ſubjection under his feet:* for now the Son of man, being alſo the Son of God, is *the Head of all principality and power*, is *the Lord of all things*, is the Sovereign Prince of all the world; is placed *far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not onely in this world, but alſo in that which is to come.* This is a peculiar honour, to which the higheſt Angels cannot pretend; for, *he took not the nature of Angels, but he took the ſeed of Abraham*; whence thoſe noble creatures are become in a manner inferiour to poor us; and according to juſt obligation, willingly do adore our nature; for, *when God brought his firſt begotten Son into the world, he ſaid, Let all the Angels of God worſhip him:* Is not indeed our fleſh become adorable, as the true *Shechinah*, as the everlaſting palace of the ſupreme Majeſty, *wherein the fulneſs of the God-head dwelleth bodily*; as the moſt holy ſhrine of the divinity; as the Orb of *inacceſſible light*; as more than all this, if more could be expreſſed, or if we could expound that text, *the word was made fleſh, and dwelt in us?* May not our ſoul worthily claim higheſt reſpect, all whoſe faculties (being endewed with unmeaſurable participations of the Holy Spirit) have been tuned to a perfect harmony with the all-wiſe underſtanding, and the moſt pure will of God? yea, which hath been admitted into the neareſt conſortſhip, into the ſtricteſt union with the eternal Word; hath

Eph. 3. 10, 19.
(Ἡνωμένῳ πρὸς χριστὸν πνεῦμα, ἡμῖν ὁ χριστὸς σάρκα. Ath. p. 612.)
Pſal. 8. 5.
Heb. 2. 7.
Col. 2. 10.
Eph. 2. 22.
Acts 10. 36.
Eph. 1. 21.
Phil. 2. 9.
1 Pet. 3. 22.
Heb. 2. 17.
Heb. 1. 6.
Ἡ σὰρξ ἐθεοποιήθη. Ath. p. 597.
Col. 2. 9.
Totum corpus implet tota divinitas. Leo de Nat. Ser. 10.
John 1. 14. 3. 34.

hath become an ingredient of him, who is *the wiſedom, and the power of God?* It was a great dignity that man ſhould be made according to the image of God, but it is a more ſublime glory, that God ſhould be made after the image of man, κατὰ πάντα ὁμοιωθεὶς, *being made like to us in all things*, bating onely ſin, which is no part of us, but an unnatural excreſcence, or a deflexion from our nature: How could we be ſo raiſed up to God as by his thus ſtooping down to us? what can be imagined more honourable to us, than that God ſhould deem us worthy of ſuch condeſcenſion? this, this indeed is our exaltation, that God for us ſhould expreſs not onely ſo vaſt charity, but ſo prodigious humility.

1 Cor. 1. 24.

Qui cùm origini humanæ multum dederit, quòd nos ad imaginem ſuam fecit, reparationi noſtræ longè amplius tribuit, cùm ſervili formæ ipſe ſe Dominus coaptavit. Leo *de Nat. Serm.* 4.

Heb. 2. 17.

Exultent ergo in laudem Dei corda credentium, & mirabilia ejus confiteantur filii hominum, quoniam in hoc præcipuè Dei opere humilitas noſtra cognoſcit, quanti eam ſuus conditor æſtimârit. Leo *Serm.* 4.

And is it not good matter of joy to be thus highly graced? when are men better pleaſed, than when they are preferred; then eſpecially, when from the meaneſt ſtate, *from the dunghill*, or *from the duſt*, they *are raiſed to be ſet among Princes*, and *made to inherit the throne of glory?* wherefore this being our caſe, that we ſons of earth, *children of corruption*, and *brethren of worms* (in *Job*'s ſtyle) we exiles of paradiſe, we heirs of death and miſery; we, that by our nature are the loweſt of all intelligent creatures, that by our merits were debaſed *beneath the beaſts that periſh*, that we are aſſumed to ſuch relations, that we are ennobled to ſuch a pitch, that our nature hath mounted ſo high above all creatures, with what enlargement of heart ſhould we entertain a diſpenſation ſo wonderfull; how welcome ſhould that day be, which doth introduce it?

Pſal. 113. 7, 8.
1 Sam. 2. 8.
Job 17. 14.
Pſal. 39. 12.

Hic infirmitatũ noſtræ ſuſcipiens conditionem, propter quos ad inferna deſcendit eoſdem in cæleſtibus collocavit. Leo *de Nat.* 5.

6. Finally, if we ſurvey all principal cauſes of joy, and ſpecial exultation, we ſhall find them all concurring in this event.

Is a meſſenger of good news embraced with joy? Behold the great Evangeliſt is come, with his mouth full of news, moſt admirable, moſt acceptable: He, who doth acquaint us, that God is well pleaſed, that man is reſtored, that *the adverſary is caſt down*, that paradiſe is ſet open, and immortality retrieved; that truth and righteouſneſs, peace and joy, ſalvation and happineſs are deſcended, and come to dwell on earth; He of whom the Prophet told, *How beautifull upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings; that publiſheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publiſheth ſalvation, that ſaith unto Sion, Thy God reigneth*; He who doth himſelf thus declare the drift and purport of his meſſage; *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath ſent me to bind up the broken hearted; to proclaim liberty to the captives, and opening of the priſon to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, to comfort all that mourn.*

Apoc. 12. 10.
John 14. 30.
Luke 10. 18.
Iſa. 52. 7.
Nah. 1. 15.
Rom. 10. 15.
Iſa. 61. 1, 2.
Luke 4. 18.

Is the birth of a Prince by honeſt ſubjects to be commemorated with joyous feſtivity? Behold a Prince born to all the world; a Prince undertaking to rule mankind with ſweeteſt clemency, and exact juſtice; a Prince bringing with him all peace and proſperity; *in whoſe days Judah ſhall be ſaved, and Iſrael ſhall dwell ſafely*; who ſhall protect us in aſſured reſt and ſafety; ſhall ſecure us from all danger and miſchief; ſhall atchieve moſt gallant and glorious exploits in our behalf; ſhall vanquiſh all the enemies of our welfare, ſhall reſcue us from the worſt ſlaveries and miſchiefs; ſhall ſettle us in a moſt free and happy ſtate: He *who bringeth ſalvation from our enemies, and from the hands of all that hate us*, that *being delivered from the hands of our enemies, we might ſerve him without fear, in holineſs and*

Iſa. 11. 2.
Pſal. 45. & 72.
Jer. 23. 6.
Luke 1. 71, 74.

and righteouſneß before him, all the days of our life: Now therefore it is ſeaſonable to cry out, *Allelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth, let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him.* Apoc. 19. 6. 11. 15.

May victory worthily beget exultation? See, the invincible warriour doth iſſue forth into the field *conquering and to conquer*; He that ſhall baffle and rifle *the ſtrong one*, our formidable adverſary; that ſhall rout all the forces of hell, and *triumph over* the powers of darkneſs; that utterly ſhall defeat ſin, and ſlay death it ſelf; that ſhall ſubdue the world, and lay all things proſtrate at his feet; behold the *Captain of our ſalvation*; arrayed with glorious humility, and armed with a mighty patience; See, the great blow is ſtruck, at which the infernal powers do ſtagger; the Devil's pride and envy are abaſed; all the enemies are amazed, are daunted, are confounded at his preſence; they cannot ſtand, they break, they ſcatter, they flee before him. Iſa. 9. 3. Apoc. 6. 2. Luke 11. 22. Col. 2. 15. (John 6. 33.) 1 John 3. 8. Rom. 16. 20.

Is a proclamation of peace, after ruefull wars, to be ſolemnized with alacrity? Behold then everlaſting peace between heaven and earth, a general peace among men, a ſound peace between each good man and himſelf are ſettled and publiſhed; the illuſtrious herald, the noble hoſtage of them is arrived; *the Prince of peace* himſelf doth bring all peace unto us. Eph. 2. 17. (Iſa. 57. 2.) Acts 10. 36. Iſa. 9. 6.

Is ſatisfaction of deſire, and hope very pleaſant? Behold the *deſire of all nations, the expectation of Iſrael*, he for whom the whole creation groaned, is come.

Is recovery of liberty delectable to poor ſlaves and captives? Behold, the *Redeemer is come out of Sion*; the pretious ranſome, ſufficient to purchaſe the freedom of many worlds, is laid down; unblemiſhed innocence, purity and perfection appearing in humane nature have procured a releaſement for us; have unlocked the priſon of ſin detaining us, have knocked off the ſhackles of guilt ſorely pinching and galling our conſciences; have wreſted us from the hands of thoſe proud Maſters, who claimed a right, who exerciſed a moſt tyrannous power over us; He is come, that *proclaimeth liberty to the captives, and opening of the priſon to them that are bound*; The time is come of which the Prophet foretold —*The ranſomed of the Lord ſhall return, and come to Sion with ſongs, and everlaſting joy upon their heads; they ſhall obtain joy and gladneß; and ſorrow and ſighing ſhall flee away.* (Gal. 3. 22.)

Nam ſuperbia hoſtis antiqui non immeritò ſibi in omnes homines jus tyrannicum vindicabat; nec indebito dominatu premebat, quos à mandato Dei ſpontaneos in obſequium ſuæ voluntatis allecerat. Leo *de Nativ. Serm.* 2.

Luke 4. 18. Iſa. 35. 10.

Is an overture of health acceptable to ſick and languiſhing perſons? Behold the great Phyſician, endewed with admirable skill, and furniſhed with infallible remedies, is come, to cure us of our maladies, and eaſe us of our pains; to bind up our wounds, and to pour in balm (the moſt ſovereign balm of his own bloud) into them; to free us not onely from all mortiferous diſeaſes, but from mortality it ſelf: He, who was *ſent to bind up and heal the broken-hearted*; He, who *himſelf took our infirmities, and bare our ſickneſſes*; He, of whom the Prophet (in relation to corporal, and much more to ſpiritual infirmities) did foretell; ---*God will come and ſave you; then the eyes of the blind ſhall be opened, and the ears of the deaf ſhall be unſtopped; then ſhall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb ſhall ſing*; He whoſe art no diſeaſe can reſiſt, who is able to cure our moſt deſperate, our moſt inveterate diſtempers; to heal the corruption and impotency of our nature, to void the ignorances and errours of our underſtanding, to correct the ſtupidity of our hearts, the perverſeneſs of our wills, the diſorder of our affections; to mitigate our anguiſh of conſcience, and cleanſe our ſores of guilt; by various efficacious medicines, by Luke 10. 33. Matt. 9. 12. 1 Pet. 2. 24. Iſa. 61. 1. Luke 4. 18. Iſa. 53. 4. Matt. 8. 17. Iſa. 35. 5. Matt. 11. 5. Luke 5. 17. (John 12. 40. Acts 10. 38. Luke 10. 34.) (Ezek. 36. 26. Eph. 2. 10.)

the wholeſome inſtructions of his doctrine, by the powerfull inſpirations of his grace, by the refreſhing comforts of his Spirit, by the ſalutary virtue of his merits and ſufferings.

In natali Domini quaſi in nuptiis ſpiritalibus ſponſæ ſuæ Eccleſiæ Chriſtus adjunctus eſt —tunc proceſſit ſponſus de thalamo ſuo, hoc eſt, verbum Dei de utero virginali. Aug. *de temp. Serm.* 2.
Ἡ παρὰς ἐν ᾗ ὁ λόγος ἐνυμφεύσατο τὴν σάρκα. Procl. *in* Eph. *p.* 1.
Joel 2. 16.

Is mirth ſeaſonable on the day of marriage? Behold the greateſt wedding, that ever was, is this day ſolemnized: heaven and earth are contracted; divinity is eſpouſed to humanity; a ſacred, an indiſſoluble knot is tyed between God and man; *The bridegroom is come forth out of his chamber* (*Verbum Dei de utero Virginali*) clad in his nuptial garment of fleſh, and
Apoc. 19. 7. ready to wed the Church his beloved Spouſe; *Let us therefore be glad and rejoice; for the marriage of the lamb is come, and his wife hath made her ſelf ready.*

Is the acceſs of a good friend to be received with chearfull gratulation? Behold the deareſt and beſt friend of all mankind (moſt able, moſt willing, moſt ready to perform all good offices; to impart wholeſome advice, needfull aid, ſweet converſe, and ſeaſonable conſolation) is arrived to viſit us, to ſojourn with us, to dwell in us for ever.

Is opportune relief gratefull to perſons in a forlorn condition, pinched with extreme want, or plunged in any hard diſtreſs? Behold, a mercifull, a bountifull, a mighty ſaviour and ſuccourer, undertaking *to comfort all that mourn*; inviting all ſuch to receive from him a plentifull ſupply for their needs, a comfortable eaſe in their preſſures, a happy riddance from
Ἐκεῖξε. their calamities; who *crieth* aloud, *If any one thirſteth, let him come to me*
John 7. 37. *and drink; Come to me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give*
Iſa. 55. 1. 44. 3. *you reſt.*
Matt. 11. 28.

Is the Sun-riſing comfortable, after a tedious, darkſome and cold night?
Mal. 4. 2. See, *the Son of righteouſneſs is riſen with healing in his wings*, diſpenſing all
Luk. 1. 78, 79. about his pleaſant rays, and kindly influences: *The day-ſpring from on high hath viſited us*; diffuſing an univerſal light upon the ſouls of men, whereby the night of ignorance is diſpelled, the ſpectres of errour are vaniſhed, the miſts of doubt are ſcattered; whereby we clearly and aſſuredly diſcern all truths of importance to us, and worthy of our knowledge; concerning the nature and attributes, the works and providence, the will and pleaſure of God; concerning our ſelves, our natural and original, our duty and intereſt, our future ſtate, and final doom: *Our light is come, and the glory of the*
Iſa. 60. 1. John 8. 12. 9. 5. 1. 9. Luke 3. 6. 1. 79. *Lord is riſen upon us; the light of the world, the true light, enlightning every man*; by whoſe luſtre *all fleſh may ſee the ſalvation of God*, and *which guideth our feet into the way of peace*, doth viſibly ſhine forth upon us.

Never indeed did heaven with ſo fair and ſerene a countenance ſmile upApoc. 22. 26. on earth, as then it did, when this (ἀστὴρ λαμπρὸς ὁ ὀρθρινός,) *bright and morning-ſtar* did ſpring up above our horizon, bringing this goodly day; and with it ſhedding life and chear among us.

From this auſpicious day did commence the revocation of that fatal curſe, by which we were expelled from paradiſe, adjudged to death, and committed to hell; from thence we became re-inſtated in a condition of hope, and in a fair capacity of happineſs; from thence is to be dated a return of joy into this region of diſconſolateneſs. In this nativity mankind was born, or did revive from manifold deaths; from a legal, a moral, a natural, an eternal death; from lying dead in irreparable guilt, and under an inſuperable power of ſin; from having our bodies irrecoverably diſſolved by corruption, and our ſouls immerſed into that *ſecond* more ghaſtly *death*, of perpetual incurable anguiſh.

It

It is in effect therefore the birth-day of the world; the beginning of a new, better, eternal life to men, (offered to all, and effectually beſtowed on thoſe, who will embrace it) which we now do celebrate: all reaſon therefore we have to rejoice moſt heartily, and moſt abundantly; As the goods thence accruing to us are in multitude innumerable, in quality ineſtimable, in duration immenſe; ſo in ſome correſpondence ſhould our joy be very intenſe, very effuſe, very ſtable; The contemplation of them ſhould infuſe ſomewhat of that *unſpeakable joy*, whereof St. *Peter* ſpeaketh; we ſhould *be filled* (according to St. *Paul*'s expreſſion) *with all joy and peace in believing* them; we ſhould *hold faſt* (as the Apoſtle to the *Hebrews* adviſeth) *the confidence and rejoycing of hope*, grounded on them, *firm to the end.*

It is the birth-day of the Church.

Generatio enim Chriſti origo eſt populi Chriſtiani, & natalis capitis natalis eſt corporis. P. Leo de Nat. Serm. 6.

Sicut cum Chriſto in paſſione crucifixi, in reſurrectione reſuſcitati, in aſcenſione ad dextram Patris collocati, ità cum ipſo ſumus in hac nativitate congeniti. Ibid.

Χαρᾷ ἀνεκλαλήτῳ. 1 Pet. 1. 8. Rom. 15. 13. Phil. 1. 25. Heb. 3. 6. Rom. 12. 12.

Having ſo many, ſo great cauſes of joy, are we not very ſtupid, are we not ſtrangely croſs and perverſe if we neglect ſo pleaſant a duty?

To conclude, Of all the days that riſe upon us this undoubtedly is the Queen, crowned by God's own hand with ſovereign bleſſings; God hath avowed it to be the day of his peculiar making, and therefore of our ſpecial rejoicing; for thus of old the inſpired *Pſalmiſt* did teach and exhort us to keep *Chriſtmas*, *This is the day, which the Lord hath made, let us rejoice and be glad therein.*

Pſal. 118. 24. Matt. 21. 42. 21. 9. Acts 4. 11. 1 Pet. 2. 7.

SERMON XLIV.

The Sufferings of Chriſt foretold in the Old Teſtament.

ACTS III. 18.

But thoſe things, which God before had ſhewed by the mouth of all his Prophets, that Chriſt ſhould ſuffer, he hath ſo fulfilled.

MANY good arguments there are, different in kind, which conſpire to perſuade the truth of our religion; ſuch as are the intrinſick reaſonableneſs, excellency and perfection of its doctrine; the miraculous works performed in atteſtation thereto; the ſpecial favour of providence declared in the ſupport and propagation thereof; but upon no other ground do the Scriptures ſo much build its truth, and our obligation to embrace it, as upon the exact correſpondence and conformity thereof to all the ancient Scriptures, which did foreſhew or foretell its

revelation and introduction into the World; to thoſe eſpecially which deſcribed the perſonal characters, circumſtances and performances of our Lord: to this *our Lord* in his diſcourſes, and diſputes with incredulous peo-
John 5. 39. ple, referred them; *Search the Scriptures*, (ſaid he) *becauſe in them ye expect to have eternal life* (that is, to find the true way of ſaving truth leading thereto) *and thoſe are they which teſtifie of me*; by this he inſtructed
Luke 24. 27. and convinced his Diſciples; *beginning from Moſes and from all the Prophets*
22. 37. *he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himſelf:*
1. 70.
24. 44. and, *Theſe* (ſaid he to them, preſently before his departure) *are the words which I ſpake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things muſt be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moſes, and in the Prophets, and in the Pſalms, concerning me:* This the *Apoſtles* in all their preaching (whereby they taught, proved and perſuaded, the Chriſtian doctrine) did chiefly in-
Acts 3. 22,24. ſiſt upon; *Moſes* (ſaith St. *Peter*) *truely ſaid unto the Fathers, yea, and all the Prophets from Samuel, and thoſe that follow after, as many as have ſpoken,*
Acts 10. 43. *have likewiſe foretold of theſe days*; and, *To him* (ſaith he again) *give all*
13. 27. 15. 15. *the Prophets witneſs, that through his name whoſoever believeth in him ſhall*
24. 14.
John 1. 45. *receive remiſſion of ſins.* And, of St. *Paul*'tis ſaid, that *he mightily convin-*
Acts 18. 28. *ced the Jews ---- ſhewing by the Scriptures, that Jeſus was the Chriſt*; and
28. 23. *---- he expounded, and teſtified the Kingdom of God, perſuading them concerning Jeſus, both out of the law of Moſes, and out of the Prophets*; thus the chief *Apoſtles* and founders of our religion in their publick diſcourſes; and in their *Epiſtles*, they obſerve the ſame method; as particularly aſſerting Chriſtian doctrines and duties by the teſtimonies of prophetical Scriptures, ſo generally affirming our religion to be chiefly grounded on them; *of*
1 Pet. 1. 10. *which ſalvation* (ſaith St. *Peter*, concerning the ſalvation exhibited by the Goſpel) *the Prophets did enquire, and ſearch diligently, who propheſied of the grace to come unto you*; and (in regard to the conviction of others) he ſeems to prefer the atteſtation of this kind before the ſpecial revelation immediately made to the *Apoſtles*; for having ſpoken of it, he ſubjoins, κ᾽
2 Pet. 1. 19. ἔχομεν βεβαιότερον τ῾ προφητικὸν λόγον· *We have alſo a more ſure word of prophecy, whereunto ye doe well, that ye do take heed, as unto a light that ſhineth in a dark place, untill the day dawn, and the day-ſtar ariſe in your hearts.*
Rom. 16. 25, And, St. *Paul* ſaith, that *the myſtery, which was kept ſecret ſince the world be-*
26. 1. 2. *gan, was then made manifeſt, and by the prophetical ſcriptures, according to the commandment of the everlaſting God, made known to all nations, to the*
1 Tim. 3. 15. *obedience of faith*; and, *The Holy Writings* (he telleth *Timothy*) *were able to make him wiſe to the ſalvation*, which is, *by the faith of Jeſus Chriſt*; that is, they were able to ſhew, and perſuade to him the truth of Chriſtianity, which promiſeth ſalvation to all that heartily embrace it, and obſerve its Laws.

Such a ſtreſs was laid upon this probation by the *founders* of our Religion; and no wonder; for that it is not onely extremely forcible in it ſelf, but hath ſome particular uſes, and ſome peculiar advantages beyond others. The fore-knowledge of future contingent events (ſuch as were many of thoſe concerning our Saviour, depending upon the freeſt acts of humane will) as it is for the manner of attaining it moſt incomprehenſible to us, ſo it is moſt proper to God, and by all men ſo acknowledged; (future contingencies being ſecrets, which no man, no angel, no creature can dive into, they being not diſcernible in their cauſes, which are indeterminate; nor in themſelves, who are finite.) The prediction therefore of ſuch events could not otherwiſe than proceed from his pleaſure; neither could he yield it in way of favour and approbation to that, which was not perfectly

fectly true, and good: This way therefore doth abſolutely confirm the truth and goodneſs of Chriſtian doctrine; it withall manifeſts the great worth and weight thereof, as implying the particular regard and care God had of it, deſigning it ſo anciently, laying trains of providence toward it, and preparing ſuch evidences for the confirmation thereof; it together into the bargain maintaineth the truth of the *Jewiſh* diſpenſation, the ſincerity of the ancient Patriarchs and Prophets, and the vigilant care the divine goodneſs hath always had over the ſtate of Religion; and toward the welfare of mankind; never leaving it deſtitute of ſome immediate revelations from himſelf. It had a peculiar aptitude to convert the *Jews*, who were poſſeſſed with a full perſuaſion concerning the veracity and ſanctity of their ancient Prophets; and could not therefore doubt concerning the truth of that, which appeared conformable to that, which they had foretold ſhould be declared, and diſpenſed for their benefit. This probation alſo hath this advantage, that it ſingly taken doth ſuffice to convince; whereas others can hardly doe it otherwiſe than in conjunction with one another, and eſpecially with its aid: for the goodneſs of the doctrine may be conteſted in ſome points, and however good it ſeem, it may be imputed to humane invention: ſtrange effects may be deemed producible by other cauſes beſide divine power; and they may be ſuffered to be done for other ends than for confirmation of truth; they are alſo commonly tranſient, and thence moſt liable to doubt: Providence alſo is in many caſes ſo myſterious, and unſearchable, that the incredulous will never allow any inferences to be drawn from it: But the plain correſpondence of events to the ſtanding records of ancient Prophecies (obvious, and conſpicuous to every one, that will conſult and compare them) concerning a perſon to be ſent by God, who ſhould have ſuch circumſtances, and be ſo qualified; who ſhould in God's name preach ſuch doctrines, and perform ſuch works, is a proof which alone may aſſure any man, that ſuch a perſon doth come from God, and is in what he declareth or doeth approved by him: no counterfeiting can here find place; no evaſion can be deviſed from the force of this proof.

This way therefore of diſcourſe our *Lord* and his *Apoſtles* (whoſe buſineſs it was by the moſt proper and effectual methods to ſubdue the reaſons of men to the *obedience of faith*, and entertainment of Chriſtian truth) did eſpecially uſe; as generally in reſpect to all things concerning our *Lord*, ſo particularly in regard to his paſſion; declaring it to happen punctually according to what had been foreſeen by God, and thence foreſhewed by his Prophets, rightly underſtood; *He took the twelve* (ſaith St. *Luke* of our *Lord*) *and ſaid unto them; behold, we go up to Jeruſalem, and all things that are written by the Prophets concerning the Son of man ſhall be accompliſhed; for he ſhall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and ſhall be mocked, and ſpitefully entreated, and ſpitted on; and they ſhall ſcourge him, and put him to death.* And again, after his reſurrection, he thus reproves his Diſciples; *O fools, and ſlow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have ſpoken; ought not Chriſt to have ſuffered theſe things, and to enter into his glory?* they did not then (partly being blinded with prejudice, partly not having uſed due induſtry, and perhaps not excelling in natural capacity, however not yet being ſufficiently enlightned by divine grace) apprehend, or diſcern, that according to the prophetical inſtructions our Lord was to ſuffer; but afterward, when he had *opened their underſtanding, that they might underſtand the Scriptures*, they did ſee, and ſpecially urge this point: then Saint *Peter* declared, that *the Spirit of Chriſt, which was in the Prophets did teſtifie beforehand the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the glory that ſhould follow*; then it

Luke 18. 31.

Luke 24. 25, 26. 46.

Luke 24. 45.

1 Pet. 1. 11.

Acts 17. 2. 26. 22. 1 Cor. 15. 3. it was their manner to *reaſon* (as is ſaid of St *Paul*) *out of the Scriptures, opening, and alledging, that Chriſt muſt needs have ſuffered; ſaying none other things, than thoſe, which the Prophets and Moſes did ſay ſhould come, that Chriſt ſhould ſuffer; delivering firſt of all, that Chriſt died for our ſins, according to the Scriptures:* this is that which in my Text St. *Peter* doth inſiſt upon, affirming about the paſſion of *Chriſt*, that it not onely had been predicted by one, or more, but foreſhewed by an univerſal conſent of all the *Prophets*; to illuſtrate and confirm which aſſertion of his is the ſcope of our preſent diſcourſe; to perform which, after having briefly touched the ſtate of the matter in hand, we ſhall apply our ſelves.

That the *Meſſias* was to come in an humble and homely manner (without appearance of worldly ſplendour, or grandeur) that he was to converſe among men in a ſtate of external poverty, and meanneſs; that he was to cauſe offences, and find oppoſitions in his proceedings; that he was to be repulſed and rejected, to be hated and ſcorned, to be diſgracefully and harſhly treated, to be grievouſly perſecuted and afflicted; yea, that at laſt he was to be proſecuted, condemned and executed as a malefactour, is a truth indeed, which the *Jews* (although they firmly believed, and earneſtly expected the coming of a *Meſſias*) did not, and indeed were hardly capable to entertain. It was a Point repugnant to the whole frame of their conceits; yea, inconſiſtent with the nature and drift of their Religion, as they did underſtand it; for their Religion in its ſurface (deeper than which their groſs fancy could not penetrate) did repreſent earthly wealth, dignity and proſperity, as things moſt highly valuable; did propound them as very proper, if not as the ſole rewards of piety and obedience; did imply conſequently the poſſeſſion of them to be certain arguments of the divine goodwill, and regard: they could not therefore but eſteem poverty, affliction and diſgrace as curſes from heaven, and plain indications of God's diſfavour toward thoſe on whom they fell: they particularly are ſaid to have conceited, that to be rich was a needfull qualification for a Prophet (no leſs needfull, than to be of a good complexion; of a good capacity, of a good converſation and life) *Spiritus Dei non requieſcit ſuper pauperem, The Spirit of God doth not reſt upon a poor man*; (that is, no ſpecial communications of grace, or of wiſedom and goodneſs, are by God ever afforded to perſons of a low and afflicted condition) being a *maxim* which they had framed, and which currently paſſed among them: that he therefore, who was deſigned to be ſo notable a Prophet; who was to have the honour of being ſo ſpecial an inſtrument of promoting God's ſervice and glory; who therefore ſhould be ſo highly favoured by God, that he ſhould appear deſpicable, and undergo great afflictions, was a notion, that could not but ſeem very abſurd; that could not otherwiſe than be very abominable to them. They had farther (in congruity to theſe prejudices, abetted by that extreme ſelf-love, and ſelf-flattery, which were peculiar to that Nation) raiſed in themſelves a ſtrong opinion, that the *Meſſias* was to come in a great viſible ſtate and power; to atchieve deeds of mighty proweſs and renown; to bring the Nations of the world into ſubjection under him; and ſo to reign among them in huge majeſty and proſperity; when *Jeſus* therefore (however otherwiſe anſwerable in his circumſtances, qualifications and performances, Matt. 16. 20. to the prophetical characters of the *Meſſias*) did firſt appear ſuch as he did, with ſome pretences, or intimations rather, that he was the *Meſſias*) their ſtomach preſently roſe at it; they were exceedingly ſcandalized at him; Matt. 13. 57. they deemed him not onely *a mad-man* (one poſſeſſed or diſtracted) and 26. 65. *an impoſtour*; but *a blaſphemer*; for no leſs than blaſphemy they took it to be

be for ſo mean and pitifull a wretch (as to their eyes he ſeemed) to aſſume unto himſelf ſo high a dignity, and ſo near a relation unto God, as being the *Meſſias* did import: we even ſee the Diſciples themſelves of our Lord ſo deeply imbued with this national prejudice, that, even after they had avowed him for the *Chriſt*, they could ſcarce with patience hear him foretelling what grievous things ſhould befall him: St. *Peter* himſelf, upon that occaſion, even juſt after he ſeriouſly had confeſſed him to be the *Chriſt*, *did*, as it is expreſſed, *take him, and began to rebuke him, ſaying, Be it far from thee, Lord:* yea, preſently after that our Lord moſt plainly had deſcribed his ſufferings to them, they could not forbear dreaming of a Kingdom, and of being *Grandees* therein; yea farther, even after our Lord's paſſion and reſurrection, this fancy ſtill poſſeſſed them; for even then they demanded of him, whether he would *at that time reſtore the Kingdom unto Iſrael*; meaning ſuch an external viſible Kingdom.

Matt. 16. 22. 17. 2. John 16. 12. Matt. 20. 21, 25. Acts 1 6.

Hence of all things, notifying the *Meſſias*, this ſeemeth to be the onely particular, which in general the *Jews* did not, or would not ſee, and acknowledge; and this cauſed them to overſee all other glorious marks, how clearly ſoever ſhining in, and about the perſon of *Jeſus:* this cloud hindred them from diſcerning the excellency of his doctrine, from regarding the ſanctity of his life, from being duly affected with the wonderfulneſs of his works; from minding, or from crediting all the teſtimonies from heaven miniſtred unto him; this, as St. *Paul* telleth us, was the main *ſcandal*, which obſtructed their embracing the Goſpel. As it was their ignorance or errour in this point, which diſpoſed them to perſecute our Lord (*niſi enim ignoratus nihil pati poſſet*, as *Tertullian* ſaith; *If they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory*, ſaith St. *Paul*) ſo it was that, which maintained their obſtainate hatred of his name and memory; although graced with ſo illuſtrious teſtimonies of divine power and providence.

1 Cor. 1. 23. Acts 13. 27. 3. 17. John 15. 21. Tert. *in* Marc. 3. 6. 2 Cor. 2. 8.

We cannot therefore here, as in other particulars concerning our Lord, alledge the general conſent of God's people in expounding the Prophets according to our ſence, this being one of thoſe points, in reſpect to which the Prophets themſelves did foreſee, and foretell their perverſe ſtupidity, and incredulity; that *they ſhould look, and not ſee; hear, and not underſtand*; yielding herein ſpecial occaſion to that complaint, *Who hath believed our report?* Yet notwithſtanding their affected, and culpable blindneſs, there is no particular concerning the *Meſſias* in the ancient *Scriptures*, either more frequently in way of myſtical inſinuation and adumbration, glanced at, or more clearly, in direct and plain language expreſſed; or which alſo by reaſonable deduction thence may be more ſtrongly inferr'd than this.

Vid. Tert. *ibid.* Iſa. 6. 9. Matt. 13. 13. Ezek. 12. 2. Acts 28. 26. Iſa. 53. 1.

1. I ſay, *firſt*, it is frequently glanced at by myſtical inſinuations; for explaining the intent of which aſſertion, we ſhall premiſe ſomewhat, which may ſerve to declare the pertinency of many citations produced out of the *ancient Scripture* in the *New Teſtament*; the which, together with others connected with them, or bearing juſt analogy to them, we alſo, being aſſured of their deſign by the authority of our *Lord* and his *Apoſtles*, may ſafely preſume after them to apply to the ſame purpoſes.

We may then conſider, that the All-wiſe God (who *worketh all things after the counſel of his own will*, and *to whom all things are preſent* (having *before eternal times* (as St. *Paul* ſpeaketh) determined in due time to ſend the *Meſſias*, for accompliſhing the greateſt deſign that ever was to be managed in this World (that which ſhould bring the higheſt glory to himſelf, and procure the richeſt benefits to the principal of his Creatures here) did by

Eph. 1. 11. 2 Tim. 1. 9. Tit. 1. 2. 1 Cor. 2. 7. Eph. 1. 3. 3. 9. Rom. 16. 25. Col. 1. 26.

by his incomprehenſible providence ſo order things, that all the ſpecial diſpenſations preceding it ſhould have a fit tendency, and an advantageous reference thereto; ſo that, when it came upon the ſtage, it might appear that the main of the plot conſiſted therein; and that whatever was acted before, had principally a reſpect thereto: As therefore from the beginning of things God did in a gradual method make real preparations towards it, by ſeveral ſteps imparting diſcoveries of his mind about it, or in order thereto, (ſomewhat to *Adam* himſelf, more to *Abraham* and the *Patriarchs*, ſomewhat farther to *Moſes*, much more yet to divers of the *Prophets*, among his choſen people, who not onely foretold largely concerning it, but delivered divers kinds of inſtruction conformable to it, and conducible to the promoting and entertainment thereof) ſo he did alſo take eſpecial care by many appoſite repreſentations (νοητὰ θεωρήματα, *intelligible ſpectacles*, or objects of mental ſpeculation, *Euſebius* calleth them) handſomely inſerted into all his diſpenſations, to ſet it out, and to inſinuate his meaning about it; that ſo it might at length ſhew it ſelf with more ſolemnity, and leſs ſurpriſe: the moſt eminent perſons therefore, whom he raiſed up, and employ'd in his affairs, tending to that end, as they did reſemble the *Meſſias*, in being inſtruments of God's particular grace and providence (being indeed inferiour *Chriſts*, and Mediatours, partial Saviours, and Redeemers of his people, as they are ſometimes called) ſo they were ordered in ſeveral circumſtances of their perſons, in divers actions they performed, in the principal accidents befalling them to repreſent him (becoming εἰκονικοὶ χριστοὶ, *Chriſts in image*, as *Euſebius* again ſtyleth them:) the rites alſo and ſervices of Religion inſtituted by them in God's name were adapted to the ſame purpoſe; they and all things about them, by God's eſpecial direction and wiſe care, being fitted ſo as to be congruous emblems and ſhadows prefiguring *Chriſt*, and whatever appertained to him: thus was *Adam* (as St. *Paul* calleth him) *a type of Chriſt*; and *Abel*, *Melchiſedec*, *Iſaac*, *Moſes*, *Joſhua*, *David*, *Solomon*, *Zorobabel* are intimated to have been ſuch; the moſt ſignal things done by them or befalling them, having been ſuted to anſwer ſomewhat remarkable concerning him; ſo that we may ſay of them all, as the *Apoſtle* to the *Hebrews* did of the *Jewiſh* Prieſts, *they ſerved to the ſubindication, and ſhewing of heavenly things.* In *David* particularly this relation is ſo plain, that becauſe thereof, in the Prophets *Jeremy*, *Ezekiel* and *Hoſea*, the *Meſſias* is called by his name; as if he were revived in the *Meſſias*. It indeed well ſuted the dignity of this great perſonage, and the importance of his buſineſs, that he ſhould have appointed ſo notable heralds and harbingers to *go before his face*; furniſhed with conſpicuous enſigns and badges denoting their relation to him. It was proper, that God ſhould appear to have had always an expreſs regard toward him: It conſequently doth ſerve to our edification; for that we duly comparing things, and eſpying this admirable correſpondency, may be inſtructed thereby, and eſtabliſhed in our faith; may be excited to the admiration of God's wiſedom, ſo harmoniouſly connecting things, and of his goodneſs, ſo provident for our welfare; may alſo be induced thereby the more highly to adore the *Meſſias*, and to eſteem his deſign: ſuch uſes St. *Paul* ſignifieth, when having compared divers things concerning *Moſes* to things concerning *Chriſt*, he ſaith; *All theſe things happened as types, and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world are come.*

Euſeb. *Hiſt.* 1. 3.

Pſal. 105. 15. Iſa. 45. 1. Heb. 8. 6. Gal. 3. 19. Neh. 9. 27. Acts 7. 35.

Euſeb. *Hiſt.* 1. 4.

Heb. 8. 5. Exod. 25. 40.

Rom. 5. 14. *Vid.* Euſeb. *ib.*

Heb. 8. 5. Οἵτινες ὑποδείγματι καὶ σκιᾷ λατρεύουσι τῶν ἐπουρανίων.

Jer. 30. 9. Hoſ. 3. 5. Ezek. 34. 23, 24. 37. 24, 25.

(Heb. 5. 8. 10. 1. 9. 23. Gal. 4. 24. Coloſſ. 2. 17.)

1 Cor. 10. 11, 6. 1 Pet. 1. 12.

It

It is alſo (both for illuſtration, and proof of theſe things) to be obſerved, that becauſe thoſe eminent Servants of God were Repreſentatives of *Chriſt*, many things are ſpoken of them, as ſuch; many things are aſcribed to them; which onely, or chiefly were intended of him; their names are uſed as veils to cover divers things concerning him, which it ſeemed to divine wiſedom not ſo convenient in a more open and clear manner to diſcloſe promiſcuouſly to all men. That this obſervation is true; that, I ſay, under the names of perſons repreſenting *Chriſt*, (or of things, we may add, adumbrating his things) many things are intimated principally concerning him, and his diſpenſations, may be collected, and confirmed from hence, that many things are attributed to perſons (and to things alſo) which do not agree to them; many things were promiſed, which appear never accompliſhed, except after an improper and hyperbolical manner of expreſſion, or according to an enormous wideneſs of interpretation; ſuch as do not well ſeem to ſute the nature of true hiſtories, and ſerious promiſes: thus, for inſtance, many things are foretold concerning the large extent, and proſperous ſtate of the *Jewiſh* Church; which hiſtory and experience do teſtify never (according to ſtrictneſs of literal acception, yea not in any tolerable degree, near the height of what the words import) to have come to paſs: thus alſo (as the *Apoſtle* to the *Hebrews* argueth) effects are attributed to the *Jewiſh* rites and ſacrifices, which according to the nature of things cannot belong to them, otherwiſe than as ſubſtitutes, and ſhadows of things more high in ſubſtance, and efficacy: thus alſo what is with ſolemn oath promiſed to *Solomon* (concerning the vaſt extent, and endleſs duration of his empire in righteouſneſs, peace and proſperity; together with his mighty acts, and ſucceſsfull atchievements) doth not appear directly in any competent meaſure to have been accompliſhed: thus alſo *David* (as St. *Peter* in the 2*d* of the *Acts* obſerveth, and groundeth his argumentation on it) ſpeaketh divers things of himſelf; which cannot be conceived properly and literally agreeable to him: ſuch things therefore (having ſome truth under them) are reaſonably ſuppoſed to be intimations of ſomewhat appertaining to the future more perfect ſtate of things under the *Meſſias*; to concern him (who was to be *the end of the law*) and his diſpenſation, which was to be the accompliſhment of all things predicted and preſignified: this is that, which St. *Auſtin* ſignifieth, when he ſaith of *Chriſt*, that, *Him all the promiſes of the Jewiſh Nation, all their prophecies, prieſthoods, ſacrifices, their temple, and all their ſacraments whatever did reſound*, or expreſs.

Iſa. 25. 8. Heb. 10. 4. Pſal. 45. 72, 83, *&c.* Acts 2. 29.

Rom. 10. 4. 2 Cor. 13. 13. Luke 22. 37. 1 Pet. 1. 10, *&c.*

Quem Chriſtum --- omnia gentis illius promiſſa, omnes prophetiæ, ſacerdotia ſacrificia, templum, & cuncta omnino ſacramenta ſonuerunt. Aug. *ad* Voluſ. *Ep.* 3.

Neither are theſe things onely ſaid according to ſuppoſitions aſſumed in the *New Teſtament*; but they agree (as to their general importance) to the ſenſe of the ancient *Jews*, who did conceive ſuch myſterious references often to lie couched under the letter of the Scriptures: they did ſuppoſe every where a *Midraſh*, or myſtical ſenſe; which they very ſtudiouſly (even to an exceſs of curioſity and diligence) ſearched after: it was a conſtant and confident opinion of their Doctours, that all things in *Moſes* his Law were typical, and capable of allegorical expoſition; and *Philo's* writings (compoſed immediately after our Saviour's times) do ſhew that opinion then to have been paſſable. We have alſo ſeveral inſtances and intimations thereof in the *New Teſtament*; neither is it probable, that our Lord and the *Apoſtles* would in their diſcourſes and diſputations with

Vid. Capell. *in Exerc. ad* Zohar.

the *Jews* have uſed this way of alledging and interpreting paſſages of Scripture, if they in general had not admitted and approved it.

Vid. Chryſ. *Tom.* 6. *p.* 649, *&c.* 658, *&c.*

Why God ſhould chuſe to expreſs matters of this nature in ſuch a manner, we need not to determine; it might be perhaps for reaſons onely known to himſelf, above our ken, or cogniſance; yet divers probable reaſons may be aſſigned for it, yea ſome more than probable, ſeeing they are expreſſed, or hinted in Scripture: It might be for a decent, and harmonious diſcrimination of times, of diſpenſations, of perſons; it might be from the depth of things to conciliate reverence to them, and to raiſe the price of knowing them, by the difficulty of attaining thereto; it might be by exerciſe to improve the underſtandings of men, to inflame their deſire, to excite their induſtry, to provoke their devotion, to render them modeſt and humble; it might be for occaſion to reward an honeſt, and diligent ſtudy of God's word; and to convey ſpecial gifts of interpretation; it might be to conceal ſome things from ſome perſons unworthy, or unfit to know them; eſpecially from haughty and ſelf-conceited perſons; it might be to uſe the ignorance of ſome as a means to produce ſome great events; ſuch as was the miſuſing and perſecuting our Lord: for ſuch reaſons it might be, and there is no good reaſon againſt it; for it cannot be ſuppoſed neceſſary, that all things ſhould be plainly diſcovered at all times, and to all perſons; it is evident that ſome things are couched in parabolical, and myſterious expreſſion; it is particularly the manner of prophetical inſtruction frequently to involve things, the full and clear knowledge of which is not congruous to every ſeaſon, nor ſutable to every capacity; but reſerved for times, and perſons, for which the divine wiſedom onely knows them moſt proper.

Apoc. 2. 7. 13. 18. 17. 9. Matt. 13. 9. 24. 15. Dan. 9. 1. John 5. 39. Luke 24. 45. 1 Cor. 12. 10. 14. 26. Eph. 1. 9, 10. Matt. 13. 13. 11. 25. 7. 6. 1 Cor. 2. 8. Acts 3. 17. Gal. 4. 4. Eph. 1. 10. 1 Tim. 2. 6.

Theſe things being thus premiſed, we come to our particular caſe, and ſay, that (according to what our *Lord*, and his *Apoſtles* teach) the *Meſſias* his being to ſuffer was in divers paſſages of the ancient Scripture prefigured: ſuppoſing the thing it ſelf determined to be, there are peculiar reaſons, why it rather ſo, than in a more open manner, ſhould be repreſented, contained in thoſe words of *Tertullian*: *The Sacrament indeed* (ſaith he) *of Chriſt's paſſion ought to have been figured in the* (ancient) *predications; for as much as that the more incredible it was* (*if it ſhould have been preached nakedly*) *the more offenſive it would have been; and the more magnificent it was, the more it was to be overſhadowed, that the difficulty of underſtanding it might be cauſe of ſeeking of God's grace.* Suppoſing it alſo that it ſhould be, it is plain that the paſſages about *Abel*, *Iſaac*, *Joſias*, *Jeremy*, and the like may congruouſly be applied thereto; that the elevation of the *Brazen Serpent*, and the ſlaying the *Paſchal* Lamb may appoſitely repreſent it; the *Jewiſh Prieſts*, with all their Sacrifices, may alſo with reaſon be brought in, and accommodated thereto: theſe things indeed by themſelves ſolitarily are not apt peremptorily to evince, that it ſhould be; yet do they handſomely ſute it, and adorn the ſuppoſition thereof; according to the notion premiſed about the figurative relation between the matters of the *Old* World before the *Meſſias*, and the *New* one after him. But with a clearer evidence, and ſtronger force we may affirm, that the *Meſſias* his ſufferings were implied in the afflictions, aſcribed to his repreſentative King *David*, ſuch as he in ſeveral *Pſalms* (in the 35, 69, 109, 118, and eſpecially in the 22 *Pſalm*) deſcribeth them; wherein divers paſſages, expreſſing the extreme ſadneſs; and for-

Utique ſacramentum paſſionis ipſius figurari in prædicationibus oportuerat quantóque incredibile, tanto magis ſcandalum futurum, quantóque magnificum, tanto magis adumbrandum; ut difficultas intellectûs gratiam Dei quæreret. Tert. *in* Jud. 10.

forlornneſs of his condition, occur, which by the hiſtory of his life do not ſo well according to the literal ſignification of words, appear congruous to his perſon; which therefore there is a neceſſity, or at leaſt much reaſon, that they ſhould be applied to the *Meſſias*, whom that *Holy King* did repreſent.

Which being admitted, comparing the paſſages we find there to that which befell *Jeſus*, we may obſerve an admirable harmony; there being ſcarce any part of his affliction in his life, or at any circumſtance thereof at his death, which is not in expreſs and emphatical terms there ſet out: there we have expreſſed his low, and deſpicable eſtate (*I am a worm, and no man; the reproach of men, and deſpiſed of the people*) Pſal. 22. 6. the cauſeleſs hatred and enmity of the populacy, and of the great ones toward him (*They that hate me without a cauſe are more than the hairs of my head; they that would deſtroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty; they compaſſed me about with words of hatred, and fought againſt me without a cauſe*) Pſal. 69. 4. 35. 7. 109. 3. the ingratefull requital for all the good intended, and performed by him; (*They rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love*) Pſal. 35. 12. 109. 5. their rejecting him (*The ſtone which the builders refuſed is become the head-ſtone in the corner.*) Pſal. 118. 22. Their inſidious, and calumnious proceedings againſt him, (*without cauſe have they hid for me their net; in a pit, which without cauſe they have digged for my ſoul.* And, *Falſe witneſſes did riſe up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not*; and, *The mouth of the wicked, and the mouth of the deceitfull are opened againſt me; they have ſpoken againſt me with a lying tongue.*) Pſal. 35. 7. 11. 109. 2. Their bitter inſulting over him in his affliction; (*But in mine adverſity they rejoiced, and gathered themſelves together; yea the abjects gathered themſelves together againſt me:*) Pſal. 35. 15. 69. 26. *They perſecute him, whom thou haſt ſmitten, and they talk to the grief of thoſe, whom thou haſt wounded:* ἐκ ὅτι τὸ ἄλγος τῶν τραυμάτων μου προσέθηκαν, *and to the ſmart of my wounds they have added*; ſay the LXXII.) Their ſcornfull, reviling, flouting, and mocking him; (*All they that ſee me, laugh me to ſcorn; they ſhoot the lip, they ſhake the head; ſaying, He truſted in the Lord, that he would deliver him, let him deliver him, ſeeing he delighteth in him.* And, *I became a reproach unto them; when they looked upon me, they ſhaked their heads; they opened their mouth wide againſt me, and ſaid, Aha, aha, our eye hath ſeen it.* Ἐπείρασαν με, ἐξεμυκτήρισαν μυκτηρισμὸν, ἔβρυξαν ἐπ' ἐμὲ τὰς ὀδόντας αὐτῶν· *they tempted me, they extremely mocked me, they gnaſhed their teeth upon me.*) Pſal. 109. 25. 35. 22. 16. 22. 6, 7. Their cruel and contemptuous uſage of him; (*Dogs have compaſſed me; the aſſembly of the wicked have encloſed me; they pierced my hands, and my feet; I may tell all my bones; they look, and ſtare upon me.*) Pſal. 22. 16. Their abuſive dealing with him, when he in his diſtreſs called for ſome refreſhment; (*They gave me gall for my meat, and in my thirſt they gave me vinegar to drink.*) Pſal. 69. 21. Their diſpoſal of his garments upon his ſuffering; (*They part my garments among them, and caſt lots upon my veſture.*) Pſal. 22. 18. His being deſerted of his friends and followers; and thence deſtitute of all conſolation; (*I am become a ſtranger to my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children; ---- I am full of heavineſs, and I looked for ſome to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none.*) Pſal. 69. 9. 20. The ſenſe of God's with-holding his favour, and help; (*My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me? why art thou ſo far from helping me?*) Pſal. 22. 1. 69. 17. His charitable diſpoſition and demeanour toward his enemies and perſecutours; (*But as for me, when they were ſick* (when they did trouble me, ſay the *LXX.*) *my cloathing was ſackcloath, I humbled my ſelf with faſting, and my prayer returned into my own boſome; I behaved my ſelf* Ἐν τῇ αὐτοὺς πενθεῖν με. Pſal. 35. 13, as

as though it had been my friend, or brother, I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for his mother.) Which paſſages, and the like, how patly, and punctually they do ſquare to reſpective paſſages in the *Goſpels*, I need not to ſhew; we do, I preſume, all of us well enough remember that both moſt dolefull and comfortable hiſtory, to be able our ſelves to make the application.

But there farther are not onely ſuch oblique intimations, of ſignifications of this matter ſhrowded under the coverture of other perſons, and names; but very direct, and immediate predictions, concerning the *Meſſias* his being to ſuffer, moſt clearly expreſſed: that whole famous *Chapter* Iſ. 53. (the 53d) of *Eſay*, doth moſt evidently and fully declare it, wherein the kind, manner, cauſes, ends, and conſequences of his ſufferings, together with his behaviour under them, are graphically repreſented: his appear- v. 2. ing meanneſs (*He hath no form, or comelineſs; and when we ſhall ſee him, there is no beauty, that we ſhould deſire him:*) the diſgrace, contempt, v. 3. repulſes, and rejection he underwent (*He is deſpiſed and rejected of men* v. 3, 4. *---- we hid our faces from him; he was deſpiſed, and we eſteemed him not.*) His afflicted ſtate (*He is a man of ſorrows, and acquainted with grief; we did eſteem him ſtricken, ſmitten of God, and afflicted,*) the bitter, and pain- v. 5, 8. full manner of his affliction (He *was ſtricken*; he *bare ſtripes*; he *was wounded and bruiſed*) his being accuſed, adjudged and condemned as a v. 8, 12. malefactour (*He was taken from priſon, and from judgment ---- he was numbred among the tranſgreſſours*) his death conſequent (*He powred out his ſoul unto death; he was cut out of the Land of the living*) the deſign and end of his ſufferings; they were appointed, and inflicted by divine providence for our ſake, and in our ſtead; for the expiation of our ſins; and our v. 10, 5, 4, 8, 6. 12. ſalvation. (*It pleaſed the Lord to bruiſe him; he hath put him to grief---- when thou ſhalt make his ſoul an offering for ſin ----- he was wounded for our tranſgreſſions, he was bruiſed for our iniquities ---- the chaſtiſement of our peace was upon him, and with his ſtripes we are healed ---- ſurely he hath born our griefs, and carried our ſorrows ---- for the tranſgreſſion of my people he was ſmitten ---- the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all*) his ſuſtaining all this with a willing, quiet, humble patience, and perfect meekneſs (*He* v. 7. *was oppreſſed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the ſlaughter, and as a ſheep before the ſhearer is dumb, ſo he opened not his mouth*) his charitable praying for his perſecutours, and de- v. 12. ſigning their welfare (*He made interceſſion for the tranſgreſſours*) the bleſſed conſequences, and happy ſucceſs of his ſufferings, in the converſion, and juſtification of men; in performing God's will and work; in being v. 10, 11, 12. ſatisfied, rewarded, and exalted himſelf (*He ſhall ſee his ſeed, he ſhall prolong his days, and the pleaſure of the Lord ſhall proſper in his hand; he ſhall ſee of the travail of his ſoul, and ſhall be ſatisfied; by his knowledge ſhall my righteous ſervant juſtifie many; ---- I will divide him a portion with the great, and he ſhall divide the ſpoil with the ſtrong*) which paſſages as they do moſt exactly ſute unto *Jeſus*, and might in a ſort conſtitute a true hiſtorical narration of what he did endure; together with the doctrines delivered in the Goſpel concerning the intents, and effects of his ſufferings; ſo that they did according to the intention of the divine ſpirit, relate to the *Meſſias* may from ſeveral conſiderations be made apparent; the context, and coherence of all this paſſage with the matters precedent and ſubſequent, Iſa. 52. 7, 13. the which plainly do reſpect the *Meſſias*, and his times, do argue it: *How beautifull upon the mountains are the feet of him, that bringeth good tidings*; and, *Behold my ſervant ſhall deal prudently*, &c. are paſſages immediately going

going before; to which this *Chapter* is knit in way of continuation; and immediately after it doth follow: *Sing, O barren, thou, that didſt not bear,* &c. being a no leſs perſpicuous, than elegant deſcription of the Church, enlarged by acceſſion of the *Gentiles*, which was to be brought to paſs by the *Meſſias*. The general ſcope of this whole prophecy enforceth the ſame concluſion; and the incongruity of this particular prediction to any other perſon imaginable beſide the *Meſſias* doth farther evince it; ſo high are the things aſcribed to the ſuffering perſon; as that he ſhould *bear the ſins of all God's people, and heal them*; that he ſhould *by his knowledge juſtify many* (or the multitude) that *the pleaſure of the Lord ſhould proſper in his hand* to theſe grand purpoſes; that God would *divide him a portion with the great, and that he ſhould divide the ſpoil with the ſtrong*; the magnificency and importance of which ſayings (rightly underſtood and weighed) do well agree to the *Meſſias*, but not to any other perſon, or ſimple man: whence if the ancient *Jews* had reaſon to believe a *Meſſias* was to come (as they with general conſent did ſuppoſe they had) they had as much reaſon to apply this place, as any other, to him, and thence to acknowledge that he was deſigned to be an eminent ſufferer. And indeed divers of the ancient *Targumiſts*, and moſt learned *Rabbins* did expound this place of the one *Meſſias*, which was to come; as the *Pugio fidei*, and other learned *Writers* do by ſeveral expreſs teſtimonies declare. This place alſo diſcovereth the vanity of that figment, deviſed by ſome later *Jews*; who to evade it, and to oppoſe *Jeſus*, have affirmed there was to be a double *Meſſias*; one, who ſhould be much afflicted; another, who ſhould greatly proſper; ſince we may obſerve, that here both great afflictions and glorious performances concurrently are aſcribed to the ſame Perſon. Iſa. 54. 1, &c

The ſame things are by parts alſo clearly foretold in other places of this Prophet, and in other prophetical Scriptures: By *Eſay* again in the *Chapter* immediately preceeding; *Behold* (ſaith God there) *my ſervant ſhall deal prudently, he ſhall be exalted, and extolled, and be very high*; there is God's ſervant (he, who in way of excellency is ſuch, that is, in the ſtyle of this *Prophet*, the *Meſſias*) in his real glorious capacity; it followeth concerning his external appearance; *His viſage was ſo marred more than any mans, and his form more than the ſons of men:* and again, in the 49th *Chapter*; *Thus ſaith the Lord, the redeemer of Iſrael, and his Holy one; to him, whom man deſpiſeth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a ſervant of rulers, Kings ſhall ſee, and ariſe, Princes alſo ſhall worſhip:* what can be more expreſs, and clear, than that it is ſignified here, that the *Meſſias*, who ſhould ſubject the World, with its ſovereign powers, to the acknowledgment and veneration of himſelf, was to be deſpiſed by men, to be deteſted by the *Jewiſh* people, to appear in a ſervile, and baſe condition? the ſame *Prophet* doth again in the 50th *Chapter* bring him in ſpeaking thus: *I gave my back to the ſmiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from ſhame, and ſpitting:* his offending the *Jews*, ſo as thereby to aggravate their ſins, and accelerate their puniſhments, is alſo thus expreſſed by the ſame *Prophet: And he ſhall be for a ſanctuary, but for a ſtone of ſtumbling, and for a rock of offence to both the houſes of Iſrael; for a gin, and for a ſnare to the inhabitants of Jeruſalem.* Iſa. 52. 13, 14. Iſa. 49. 7. Iſa. 50. 6. Iſa. 8. 14. (Pſal. 2. 2.)

The Prophet *Zachary* doth alſo in ſeveral places very roundly expreſs his ſufferings; his low condition in thoſe words; *Behold thy King cometh unto thee, lowly, and riding upon an Aſs*; (that is, *pauper*, mean and ſorry to appearance.) His manner of death in thoſe words: *Awake, O ſword, againſt* Zech. 9. 9. Zech. 13. 7.

againſt my Shepherd, and againſt the man, that is my fellow, ſaith the Lord of hoſts; ſmite the Shepherd, and the ſheep ſhall be ſcattered; and again;
Zech. 12. 10. *I will powr upon the houſe of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jeruſalem the ſpirit of grace, and of ſupplications, and they ſhall look upon me, whom they have pierced, and they ſhall mourn*, &c. The *Prophet Daniel* alſo in that place, from which probably the name *Meſſias* was taken, and which
Dan. 9. 26. moſt expreſly mentioneth him, ſaith, that *after 62 weeks the Meſſias ſhall be cut off, but not for himſelf* ----- Now from all theſe paſſages of *Scripture* (beſide divers others to the ſame purpoſe, obſervable by thoſe, whoſe induſtry is aſſiſted by divine illumination) we may well conclude with
Luke 24. 46. our Lord, Ὅτι οὕτω γέγραπται, καὶ οὕτως ἔδει παθεῖν τὸν χριστὸν· *that thus it was written, and thus* (according to the Prophet's foreſhewing) *it was to happen, that the Chriſt ſhould ſuffer*; ſuffer in a life of penury, and diſgrace, in a death of ſorrow and ſhame.

That it was to fall out thus, might alſo be well inferred, by reaſons grounded upon the qualities of the *Meſſias* his perſon, and upon the nature of his performances, ſuch as they are deſcribed in Prophetical *Scripture*: He was to be really, and plainly to appear a perſon of moſt admirable
Plato, Seneca, &c. vertue, and goodneſs; but never (as even *Pagan* Philoſophers have obſerved) was, or can there be any ſuch without undergoing the trial of great affliction. He was to be an univerſal pattern to men of all ſorts (eſpecially to the greateſt part of men, that is, to the poor, and afflicted) of *all righteouſneſs*; to exemplify particularly the moſt difficult pieces of duty; (*Humility, Patience, Meekneſs, Charity, Self-denial, entire reſignation* to God's will) this he ſhould not have had opportunity, or advantage of doing, ſhould he have been high, wealthy, ſplendid, and proſperous in ſecular matters, he was to exerciſe great pity, and ſympathy toward all mankind; toward the doing which it was requiſite that he ſhould himſelf taſte and feel the inconveniences, troubles, pains and ſorrows in-
Vide Theodoti, *Orat. in* Eph. 1. *Concil. p.* 997. cident to us. He was to advance the repute of ſpiritual goods, and eternal bleſſings, depreſſing the value of theſe corporeal and temporal things, which men do ſo fondly admire, and dote on: the moſt compendious, and effectual way of doing which, was by an exemplary neglect, or rejection of worldly glories, and enjoyments; refuſing the honours, profits and pleaſures here, adjoined to a high ſtate. He was by the moſt kindly, gentle and peaceable means to erect a Spiritual Kingdom; by pure force of reaſon to ſubdue the hearts and conſciences of men to the love, and obedience of God; by wiſe inſtruction to raiſe in us the hopes of future recompences in Heaven; to the accompliſhment of which purpoſes temporal glory (working on the carnal apprehenſions and affections of men) had rather been prejudicial, than conducible. He was to accompliſh and manage his great deſigns by means ſupernatural, and divine, the which would ſurely become more conſpicuous by the viſible meanneſs, and impotency of his ſtate. He was alſo moſt highly to merit from God, for himſelf, and for us (to merit God's high approbation of what he did, God's favour and grace to us) this he could not perform ſo well, as by willingly enduring for God's ſake, and in our behalf the moſt hard and grievous things. He was in fine deſigned *perfectly to ſave us*; and conſequently to appeaſe God's wrath, to ſatisfy divine juſtice, to expiate our ſins; whereto it was requiſite, that he ſhould undergo what he had deſerved, being puniſhed and afflicted for us.

Now that *Jeſus*, our *Lord*, did moſt thoroughly correſpond to whatever is in this kind declared by the *Prophets* concerning the *Meſſias*, we need

need not by minutely relating the known hiſtory of his life, and death make out any farther, ſince the whole matter is palpably notorious, and no adverſary can deny it; I ſhall therefore conclude, that it is a clear, and certain truth, which St. *Peter* in our text affirmeth, that, *Thoſe things, which God before had ſhewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Chriſt ſhould ſuffer, he hath ſo fulfilled.*

Now, *unto him that loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins in his own bloud, and hath made us Kings, and Prieſts unto God, and his Father; to him be glory, and dominion for ever and ever.* Amen. Apoc. 1. 5.

Bleſſing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him, that ſitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen.

SERMON XLV.

A Whit-Sunday Sermon of the Gift of the Holy Ghoſt.

ACTS II. 38.

-----And ye ſhall receive the gift of the Holy Ghoſt.

AMong the divers reaſonable grounds and ends of the obſerving *Feſtival* Solemnities (ſuch as are comforting the poor by hoſpitable relief, refreſhing the weary labourer by ceſſation from ordinary toil, maintaining good-will among neighbours by chearfull and free converſation, quickning our ſpirits and raiſing our fancies by extraordinary repreſentations and divertiſements, infuſing and preſerving good humour in people; ſuch as are alſo the decent conſpiring in publick expreſſions of ſpecial reverence to God, withdrawing our minds from ſecular cares, and engaging them to ſpiritual meditations) the two principal deſigns of them ſeem to be theſe. Eſth. 9. Deut. 16.

Θεοὶ ὃ οἰκ[illegible]τὸ τὴν ἀνθρώπων ἐπίπονον ψυχὸς γένϑ, ἀναπαύλας τὲ αὐτοῖς τὴν πόνων ἐτάξατο, τὴν ἑορτῶν ἀμοιβὰς τοῖς θεοῖς. Plato 2. *de Leg.*

Legum conditores feſtos inſtituerunt dies, ut ad hilaritatem homines publicè cogerentur, tanquam neceſſarium laboribus interponentes temperamentum. Sen. *de Tranq. an.* 15.

1. The affording occaſion (or rather impoſing a conſtraint upon us) with a competent frequency to attend unto, to conſider upon, to inſtruct our ſelves and others in the myſterious doctrines and inſtitutions of our Religion.

2. The

2. The engaging us ſeaſonably to practice that great duty of thankfully remembring and praiſing God for thoſe eminent mercies, and favours, which by his great grace and goodneſs have been vouchſafed to us.

For theſe purpoſes chiefly did God himſelf appoint the *Jewiſh* Feſtivals; for inſtance the *Paſſover*, the reaſon of which being inſtituted is thus expreſſed; *that thou mayſt remember the day, when thou cameſt forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life*; which words imply that the obſervation of that Solemnity did ſerve to preſerve the memory, yea the continual remembrance of that ſo notable a bleſſing, which otherwiſe might have been totally forgotten, or ſeldom conſidered; the ſame did alſo ſuggeſt occaſion of inquiry concerning the reaſons of its appointment, procuring conſequently needfull information in that material point of their religion; as doth appear by thoſe words of God. *And it ſhall come to paſs, when your children ſhall ſay unto you, what mean ye by this ſervice? that ye ſhall ſay, it is the Sacrifice of the Lord's Paſſover*; —

Deut. 16. 3.

Exod. 12. 26.

In compliance with which prudent deſigns, the *Chriſtian* Church, from her firſt infancy, hath embraced the opportunity of recommending to her children the obſervation of her chief holy *Feſtivals*, continuing the time, and retaining the name, although changing or improving, the matter and reaſon of thoſe ancient ones; the divine providence concurring to further ſuch proceeding, by ſo ordering the events of things, that the ſeaſons of diſpenſing the *Evangelical* bleſſings ſhould fall in with thoſe, wherein the *Legal* benefits moſt reſembling and repreſenting them were commemorated; that ſo there might be as well a happy co-incidence of time, as correſpondence in matter between the ancient and new Solemnities; whence as the exhibition of *Evangelical* doctrines and myſteries did meet with minds more ſutably prepared to entertain them, and as leſs innovation from former uſage did appear (a thing obſervable to be reſpected in moſt, or all the *poſitive* inſtitutions of our religion) ſo withall *Chriſtians* were engaged, while they conſidered the freſh greater mercies by God vouchſafed to them, to reflect alſo upon the favours, from the ſame ſtock of goodneſs, indulged by him to his ancient people; that as thoſe ſhould chiefly be remembred, ſo theſe ſhould not wholly be forgotten: thus did God diſpoſe, that our *Saviour* ſhould then ſuffer, when the *Paſchal Lamb* was to be offered; or that the redemption of the world from ſin and miſery ſhould then be celebrated by us, when the deliverance from the *Egyptian* ſlavery was commemorated by them: and ſo (that we may approach to our purpoſe) at the time of *Pentecoſt*, when the *Jews* were obliged to *rejoice before the Lord*, rendring thanks unto him for the harveſt newly gathered in, and the earths good fruits (the main ſupports and comforts of this life) were by God's bleſſing beſtowed on them, then did God bountifully impart the *firſt fruits* of his *Holy Spirit*, the food of our ſouls and refreſhment of our hearts; then did he cauſe his labourers to put their ſickle into the ſpiritual harveſt; converting ſouls and gathering them as mature fruits into the garners of the Church.

Aug. *de Civ. D.* 10. 4.

Deut. 16.

At the very ſeaſon (which is remarkable) that the *Law* was delivered to the *Jews*, and the *ancient Covenant* eſtabliſhed which did happen at *Pentecoſt*, as may be probably collected from the *Text*, and is commonly ſuppoſed by the *Jewiſh* Doctours, who therefore call this *Feaſt* חורת שמחה, *the joy* (or joyfull Feaſt) *of the law*, in ſignification of their joy, uſing then

Exod. 19. 1.

to

to crown their heads with garlands, and ſtrew their houſes with green herbs) at that very time was the *Chriſtian* Law moſt ſignally promulged, and the *new Covenant*'s ratification moſt ſolemnly declared by the miraculous effuſion of the divine Spirit.

The benefit therefore and bleſſing, which at this time we are bound eſpecially to conſider and commemorate, is in effect the publication and eſtabliſhment of the Covenant *Evangelical*, the foundation of all our hopes, and all our claims to happineſs; but more immediately and directly the donation of the *Holy Spirit* to the *Chriſtian* Church, and to all its members; for the better underſtanding, and more truly valuing of which moſt excellent benefit, let us briefly declare the nature, and deſign thereof.

Πεντηκοστὴν ἑορτάζομεν, ἢ πνεύματος ἐπιδημίαν, ἢ ἀφθαρσίας ἐπαγγελίας, ἢ ἐλπίδος συμπλήρωσιν, &c. Naz. Orat. 44.

Almighty God, ſeeing the generality of mankind alienated from himſelf by groſs ignorance of its duty toward him, and by habitual inclinations to violate his holy laws (originally implanted by him in our nature, or anciently revealed to our firſt parents) immerſed in errour, enſlaved to vice, and obnoxious to the wofull conſequences of them, ſevere puniſhment, and extreme miſery; was pleaſed in his immenſe goodneſs and pity to deſign its reſcue from that ſad condition; and in purſuance of that gratious deſign did reſolve upon expedients the moſt admirable, and moſt efficacious that could be: for to redeem men from the tyranny of ſin and hell, to reconcile them to himſelf, to recover them into a happy ſtate, he ſent his own onely beloved Son out of his boſome into this world, clothed with our nature; by him, as by a *plenipotentiary Commiſſioner* from himſelf, inviting all men to return unto him; declaring himſelf by the meritorious obedience, the expiatory paſſion, the effectual interceſſion of his dear Son abundantly ſatisfied for, and ready to grant a full pardon of all offences committed againſt him in their ſtate of errour and eſtrangement; to admit them into a ſtate of preſent indempnity and peace, yea to ſettle them in perpetual alliance and friendſhip with himſelf: upon moſt fair and gentle terms; namely, that renouncing their erroneous principles, and reforming their vitious courſes of life, they chearfully would embrace his mercifull overtures, and thereafter conform their lives to his righteous laws; the which, together with all his good intentions concerning them, he, by the ſame bleſſed Agent, clearly diſcovered to them; fully by him inſtructing them in their duty, and ſtrongly encouraging them to the performance thereof by the promiſe of moſt bountifull rewards; his certain love and favour attended with endleſs joy and bliſs: thus *did*, as St. *Paul* expreſſeth it, *the ſaving grace of God appear unto all men, teaching us, that, denying ungodlineſs, and worldly luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent world, expecting that bleſſed hope.* Tit. 2. 11.

But to render this wonderfully gratious deſign ſucceſsfull, in a way of wiſedom, and reaſonable proceeding, accommodated to the capacities of humane nature, it was requiſite, that there ſhould be provided convincing arguments to perſuade men of the truth and reality of theſe things (that indeed ſuch an extraordinary *Agent*, with ſuch a meſſage was come from heaven) effectual means of admoniſhing and exciting men to a heedfull advertency toward them, competent motives to a cordial acceptance of them; a power alſo ſufficient, notwithſtanding their natural impotency and inſtability, to contiuue them in the belief,

to uphold them in the practice of the duties preſcribed, in the performance of the conditions required.

For if it were not very credible, that God had truly thoſe intentions toward us, or if we did not much regard the overture of them, or if we did not conceive the buſineſs highly to concern us; or if reſolving to comply with the *Goſpel*, we yet were unable to diſcharge the conditions thereof, the deſign would totally be fruſtrated, and of it ſelf come to nothing: to prevent which diſappointment of his mercifull intentions, Almighty God did abundantly provide, in a manner and meaſure ſutable to the glorious importance of them; for to the miniſtery of his eternal wiſedom he adjoined the efficacy of his eternal love, and bleſſed Spirit; the which not onely conducted *God our Saviour* into his fleſhly tabernacle,
John 3. 34. and with *unmeaſurable communications* of himſelf did continually reſide within him, but alſo did attend him in the conſpicuous performance of numberleſs miraculous works, implying divine power and goodneſs, as exceeding not onely any natural, but all created power (ſuch as were by mere word and will healing the ſick, and reſtoring the maimed; ejecting evil ſpirits, diſcerning the ſecret thoughts of men, foretelling contingent events, reviving the dead, raiſing himſelf from the grave (which works, (ſome expreſly, others by parity of reaſon) are aſcribed to the
Matt. 12. 28. Holy Spirit; for, *If* (ſaith our *Lord*) *I by the ſpirit of God caſt out Devils*----, and,
Acts 10. 38. *God* (ſaith St. *Peter*) *anointed him with the Holy Ghoſt, and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppreſſed*
Rom. 1. 4. *by the Devil:* and *who* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *was declared to be the Son of God, according to the Holy Spirit, by the reſurrection from the dead:* So did God afford the moſt evident atteſtation that could be to the truth of our Saviour's quality, commiſſion and doctrine; by ſo clear, and rouſing ſignifications did God invite men to take notice of theſe things.

But farther to induce them heartily to comply with theſe gratious overtures, and to render them thoroughly available to the purpoſe deſigned, the ſalvation of men, according to the terms preſcribed of faith in God, and obedience to his commandments, God was pleaſed farther to reſolve, and he faithfully did promiſe that he would impart the ſame *Bleſſed Spirit*, as a continual guide and aſſiſtance to all thoſe, who ſeriouſly would entertain thoſe tenders of mercy, ſincerely reſolving the performance of the conditions.

Now although the natural and ordinary manner of this divine Spirit's operation (like that of all Spirits, and more ſubtile ſubſtances) is not by violent and ſenſible impreſſions, but rather in way of imperceptible penetration, or gentle inſinuating of it ſelf into the ſubject upon which it worketh, hardly diſcovering it ſelf otherwiſe than by the notable effects reſulting from it; and although likewiſe the proper and principal effects thereof, according to divine deſignation, do relate to the furthering our performance of the ſaid conditions requiſite toward our ſalvation, that is, to the cheriſhing our faith, and quickning our obedience; diſpoſing men to perform vertuous actions, rather than to atchieve wondrous exploits; yet more fully to ſatisfie the doubtfull, to convince the incredulous, (to confound the obſtinate) world about the truth of his intentions, more illuſtriouſly to manifeſt the completion of his promiſe, more ſurely to fortifie the faithfull againſt the ſcandals and

Καὶ γὰρ οὐ θείας ἀπήλαυσας χάριτος βαπτιζόμενος, καὶ πνεύματος μετέχεις, οὐ καὶ μὴ πρὸς τὸ σημεῖα ποιεῖν, ἀλλ' ὅσον ἀρκεῖ πρὸς τὸ πολιτείαν ὀρθὴν, καὶ ἀκολουθωτέραν λαβεῖν. Chryſ. *Tom.* 6. *Orat.* 12. *ad* Demet.

Τῶν γὰρ χαρισμάτων τῶν πνευματικῶν τὰ μὲν ἀόρατά ἐστιν καὶ πίστει καταλαμβάνεται μόνη, τὰ δὲ καὶ αἰσθητὸν ἐπιδείκνυται σημεῖον πρὸς τὴν τῶν ἀπίστων πληροφορίαν. Chryſ. T. 5. *Orat.* 88.

and temptations, which their profeſſion would incur, God was pleaſed after our *Lord*'s aſcenſion, and when the *Apoſtolical* promulgation of the *Chriſtian Doctrine* did commence, to diſpenſe both to the Teachers and the Diſciples thereof more liberal communications of that *Holy Spirit*, attended with notorious, ſtrange and wonderfull effects, apt to provoke the admiration of men, to perſuade their judgments, to prevail upon their affections, to produce within them ſtrong deſires of partaking ſo high a priſege, and excellent endowment. Acts 2. 12, 43. 4. 14. 9. 11, 16. 1 Cor. 14. 25.

The memorial therefore of that moſt gratious and glorious diſpenſation, the *Chriſtian* Church wiſely and piouſly hath continually preſerved, obliging us at this time peculiarly to bleſs God for that incomparable and ineſtimable gift, conferred then moſt viſibly upon the Church, and ſtill really beſtowed upon every particular member, duly incorporated thereinto.

I ſay beſtowed upon every particular member of the Church; for the *Evangelical* Covenant doth extend to every Chriſtian; and a principal ingredient thereof is the collation of this Spirit; which is the *finger of God*, whereby (according to the Prophet *Jeremy*'s deſcription of that Covenant) *God's law is put into their inward parts, and written in their hearts; inſcribed* (as St. *Paul* alluſively ſpeaketh) *not with ink, but by the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of ſtone, but in the fleſhly tables of the heart*; not onely as the *Jewiſh* Law repreſented from without to the ſenſes, but impreſſed within upon the mind and affections; whence God's Spirit is called *the Spirit of promiſe*, the donation thereof being the peculiar promiſe of the Goſpel; and the end of our *Saviour*'s undertaking is by St. *Paul* declared, *that we might receive the promiſe of the Spirit by faith*, that is by embracing Chriſtianity might partake thereof, according to God's promiſes; and the Apoſtolical miniſtery, or exhibition of the Goſpel is ſtyled *the miniſtration of the Spirit*, and *taſting of the heavenly gift, and participation of the Holy Ghoſt* is part of a Chriſtian's Charter; and the ſuſception of Chriſtianity is thus deſcribed by St. *Paul*; *But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, becauſe God hath choſen you from the beginning to ſalvation, through ſanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth*; and our *Saviour* inſtructed *Nicodemus*, that *No man can enter into the Kingdom of God* (that is, become a Chriſtian or ſubject of God's ſpiritual Kingdom) *without being regenerated by Water, and by the Spirit*, that is, without *Baptiſm*, and the ſpiritual grace attending it; according as St. *Peter* doth in the words adjoining to our *Text* imply, that the reception of the Holy Spirit is annexed to Holy Baptiſm; *Repent* (ſaith he) *and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jeſus Chriſt for the remiſſion of ſins, and ye ſhall receive the gift of the Holy Ghoſt; for the promiſe* (that great promiſe of the Holy Ghoſt) *is unto you, and to your Children, and to all that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God ſhall call*; that is, the *Holy Spirit* is promiſed to all, how far ſoever diſtant in place or time, whoever ſhall be invited unto, and ſhall embrace the Chriſtian profeſſion. St. *John* alſo maketh it to be the diſtinctive mark of thoſe, in whom Chriſt abideth, and who dwell in Chriſt, that is of all true Chriſtians, to have this Spirit; *Hereby* (ſaith he) *we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us*; and *Hereby we know that we dwell in him and he in us, becauſe he hath given us of his Spirit*; and St. *Paul* denieth him to be a good Chriſtian who is deſtitute thereof; *Now* (ſaith *he*) *if any man have not the Spirit of Chriſt, he is none of his*; and, *Know ye not*, ſaith *he* to the Luke 11. 20. Jer. 31. 33. Heb. 8. 10. Ezek. 11. 19. John 6. 45. 2 Cor. 3. 3. Πνεῦμα τῆς ἐπαγγελίας. Eph. 1. 13. Gal. 3. 14. Διακονία τοῦ πνεύματος. 2 Cor. 3. 8. Heb. 6. 4. 2 Theſſ. 2. 13. John 3. 5. Acts 2. 38. 1 John 3. 24. 1 John 4. 13. Rom. 8. 9. 1 Cor. 3. 16.

Corinthians, that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? that is, do ye not underſtand this to be a common privilege of all Chriſtians, ſuch as ye profeſs your ſelves to be? and the converſion of men to Chriſtianity *he* thus expreſſeth; *After the kindneſs and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared; not by any righteous works which we had done, but according to his mercy he ſaved us by the laver of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt*; And all pious diſpoſitions qualifying us for entrance into heaven and happineſs (faith, charity, devotion, every grace, every vertue) are repreſented to be *fruits of the Holy Spirit:* and, the union of all Chriſtians into one body; the *Catholick* Society of all truly faithfull people, doth, according to St. *Paul*, reſult from this one Spirit, as a common ſoul animating and actuating them: *for* (ſaith *he*) *by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free; and have all been made to drink of one Spirit.*

Tit. 3. 4.

Gal. 5. 22. Eph. 5. 9. Rom. 4. 5.

1 Cor. 12. 13.

In fine, whatever ſome few perſons, or ſome petty *Sects* (as the *Pelagians* of old, the *Socinians* now) may have deemed, it hath been the doctrine conſtantly, and with very general conſent delivered in the *Catholick* Church, that to all perſons by the holy myſtery of *Baptiſm* duly initiated to Chriſtianity, or admitted into the communion of Chriſt's body, the grace of God's Holy Spirit certainly is beſtowed, enabling them to perform the conditions of piety and vertue then undertaken by them; enlightning their minds, rectifying their wills, purifying their affections, directing and aſſiſting them in their practice; the which holy gift (if not abuſed, ill treated, driven away, or quenched by their ill behaviour) will perpetually be continued, improved and encreaſed to them; it is therefore by *Tertullian* (in his *preſcriptions againſt Hereticks*) reckoned as part of that fundamental rule, which was grounded upon the general tradition, and conſent of the Chriſtian Church, that *Chriſt had ſent the vertue of the Holy Ghoſt, in his room, which doth act believers*; to which that *Article* doth anſwer of the *Apoſtolical Creed*, in which we profeſs to *believe the Holy Ghoſt*; meaning, I ſuppoſe, thereby not onely the bare exiſtence of the *Holy Ghoſt*, but alſo its gratious communication and energy.

Tert. *de præſ.* 13. —*miſiſſe, vicariam vim Spiritûs Sancti, qui credentes agat.*

Since therefore the collation of this eminent gift and favour ſo nearly doth concern us all; ſeeing it is our preſent duty more eſpecially to praiſe and bleſs God for it; ſeeing alſo we are wont to commenſurate our gratitude to our eſtimation of the benefit, unto which it relateth, let us a little conſider the worth and excellency of this divine gift conferred on us.

That it is tranſcendently valuable we may in general hence collect, that even in our Lord's eſteem it did not onely countervail, but in a manner ſurmount the benefit of his preſence; Συμφέρει, *It is* (ſaid *he*) *expedient* (or profitable) *for you that I go away*; God having deſigned, that my abſence ſhall be ſupplied by the *Comforter*'s more beneficial preſence: and wonderfully beneficial ſurely muſt that preſence be, which could not onely compenſate, but render advantageous the loſs of that moſt benign and ſweet converſation, that tender and watchfull inſpection, that wholſome and powerfull advice, that clear and lively pattern of all goodneſs ſhining forth in our Saviour's life upon his diſciples: could there be a more indulgent Maſter, a more diſcreet guide, a more delightfull companion, a more faithfull friend, a mightier protectour, a ſurer aſſiſtant, a ſweeter comforter than he? Yes, it ſeemeth that our Saviour did apprehend, that upon ſome accompts thoſe benefits with greater

John 16. 7.

ter advantage might accrue to them by the gift of his Spirit, than by his own immediate preſence; that it by internal operation could more clearly inform the mind, more ſtrongly incline the will, more vigorouſly affect the heart, than any exteriour word or example could do: neither could our *Saviour*, according to the condition of his humanity, limited to particularities of time and place, ſo perfectly correſpond to the various exigencies of mankind; as that omnipotent Spirit, intimately preſent to, uniformly diffuſed through all things: him therefore did our Saviour leave the guardian of his otherwiſe *Orphan* diſciples; him did he ſubſtitute to undergo the care and tuition of them; to conduct them in the right way, to preſerve them from dangers, to comfort them in diſtreſſes, to manage all their concernments, to be their counſellour, monitour, advocate and patron; by him he meant fully to make good his word, that *he would be with them till the end of this world.*

Οὐκ ἀφήσω ὑμᾶς ὀρφανούς. John 14. 18.

Ἕως τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος. Matt. 28. 20.

But more diſtinctly to ſurvey the many benefits and advantages proceeding from this excellent gift unto us, we may obſerve, that on it the foundation, the improvement, the completion of all our good and happineſs do depend; that to the *Holy Spirit* in truth and juſtice are to be aſcribed, 1. Our better ſtate and being. 2. Our ſpiritual powers and abilities. 3. Our good and acceptable performances; whatever we are, whatever we can doe, whatever we actually do perform as Chriſtians.

1. We owe to the Holy Spirit our ſpiritual ſtate and being; our ſpiritual life, our freedom, our honourable condition.

Πνεῦμα ζωοποιοῦν. 1 Cor. 15. 45. John 6. 63. 2 Cor. 3. 36. Eph. 2. 1, 5. 1 Pet. 1. 23.

It is by virtue of this *quickning Spirit* that from death and corruption we are raiſed to an immortal and indefectible ſtate of life; that (as St. *Paul* ſaith) we that were *dead in treſpaſſes and ſins are quickned together with Chriſt*; we by this *incorruptible ſeed are born again*, not as formerly to a life of vanity and miſery, or to the enjoyment of a few tranſitory delights, tempered with many vexatious inconveniences, pains and troubles; but to ſure capacities of moſt ſolid and durable contentments, *to a living hope of an incorruptible inheritance reſerved in heaven for us.* 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4.

It is thereby we are free-men, enjoying a true and perfect liberty; being enfranchiſed from divers intolerable ſlaveries, to which we naturally are ſubjected, and from which otherwiſe we could not be exempted; from the dominion of a rigorous law, which preſcribeth hard duties, but doth not afford ſtrength to perform them; apt to condemn us, but not able to convert us; from the clamorous accuſations of a guilty conſcience, with anxious fears of puniſhment, that *ſpirit of bondage unto fear*, of which St. *Paul* ſpeaketh; from the tyranny of a moſt crafty, ſpitefull and cruel enemy, that wicked one who did *captivate us at his pleaſure*, and detained us under his power; from the no leſs unjuſt, no leſs miſchievous domination of our own fleſh, or natural concupiſcence, impoſing grievous tasks and deſtructive neceſſities upon us; *It is* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus, which ſetteth us free from theſe laws of ſin and of death*; ſo that, *where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.*

Gal. 4. 24. *Lex os omnium potuit obſtruere, non potuit mentem convertere.* Ambr. Rom. 8. 15. 2 Tim. 2. 26. Eph. 2. 2. Rom. 8. 2. 2 Cor. 3. 17.

From ſuch baſe thraldoms we thereby are redeemed, and not onely ſo, but are advanced to an honourable condition, are ennobled with illuſtrious relations, are entitled to glorious privileges: all the benefits and immunities contained in the charter of the *new Jeruſalem*, all the advantages and privileges appropriated to God's Court and Family thereby appertain unto us; for *we have* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *acceſs by one Spirit unto the Father*, and are thence *no more ſtrangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens of the Saints, and*

Eph. 2. 18, 19. Rev. 1. 6. 1 Pet. 2. 9.

and of the houſhold of God: by this *holy unction* we are conſecrated *Kings and Prieſts unto God*; by participation of this *immortal ſeed*, we are engrafted into alliance with the heavenly King, become children of God, brethren of Chriſt, heirs of paradiſe (an infinitely better paradiſe than
Rom. 8. 15. John 1. 13. that, from which we formerly were excluded;) for this is that πνεῦμα υἱοθεσίας, that Spirit, which conſtituteth us the Sons of God, qualifying us to be ſo by diſpoſitions reſembling God, and filial affections toward him; certifying us that we are ſo, and cauſing us by a free inſtinct *to cry*
Gal. 4. 6. *Abba, Father*, running into his boſome of love, and flying under the
Rom. 8. 14. wings of his mercy in all our needs and diſtreſſes; whence *as many as are*
Rom. 8. 16. *led by the Spirit, they* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *are the Sons of God*; and, *the Spirit it ſelf beareth witneſs with our ſpirit that we are the children of God*; yea, which may ſeem yet a farther pitch of dignity, we, by interventi-on of this Spirit, are united and incorporated into *Chriſt* himſelf, being made living members of his body, partaking a common life and ſenſe with him; by it we are compacted into the ſame ſpiritual edifice, dedicated to the worſhip and inhabitation of God; our bodies and ſouls are made temples of his divinity, thrones of his majeſty, orbs of his celeſti-
Eph. 2. 26. al light, paradiſes of his bliſsfull preſence; for, *In whom* (ſaith St. *Paul*)
1 Cor. 3. 16. *ye are built together for an inhabitation of God through the Spirit*; and, *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?*

By the *Holy Spirit* we are enſtated in theſe unconceivably glorious privileges, and by it onely we are aſſured of them, to our comfort; the gift of it as it is a great part of them, and the chief cauſe, ſo it is a ſure
Eph. 1. 13. confirmation and pledge; *Ye*, ſaith St. *Paul, were ſealed by the Holy Spirit*
Rom. 8. 9, 11. *of promiſe, which is the earneſt of our inheritance*; and *It is God who did*
2 Cor. 1. 21. *eſtabliſh us with you in Chriſt, and anointed us, and alſo ſealed us, and gave the earneſt of the Spirit in our hearts*; all which phraſes do import the ſame thing, that is, a comfortable aſſurance concerning the reality of the benefits by divine grace exhibited and promiſed to us.

2. Neither onely relatively and extrinſecally is our ſtate bettered and exalted from death to life, from ſlavery to freedom, from baſeneſs to dignity; but our ſelves anſwerably are changed, and amended by the
2 Cor. 5. 17. ſame *Holy Spirit*, with a real and intrinſecal alteration, transforming us into other things, much different from what we were in our former na-
Tit. 3. 5. tural ſtate; by that *renovation of the Holy Ghoſt*, of which St. *Paul* ſpeak-
Eph. 4. 23. eth, we are (ſaith *he*) *renewed in the Spirit of our mind*; ſo that not onely the decayed frame of our ſoul is thereby repaired, and reformed, but its powers are much improved and enlarged; we are thence endowed with new and better faculties, as it were; with quicker apprehenſions, with ſincerer judgments, with righter inclinations, with nobler paſſions, than we had before (yea than we could have had in our original ſtate;)
Eph. 4. 24. ſo that in the language of *Holy Scripture* we thence become *new men*, and
2 Cor. 5. 17. *new creatures, created according to God in righteouſneſs and true holineſs*;
Col. 3. 10. Eph. 4. 23. acccording to God, that is in conformity to the divine perfections of re-
2. 10. ctitude in mind and will, ſo as to reſemble God in a higher degree, and
Col. 3. 10. more worthy reſpects than formerly. Our Father *Adam* was made εἰς
1 Cor. 15. 45. ψυχὴν ζῶσαν, a creature endewed with life and ſenſe, furniſhed with powers and appetites diſpoſing to acquire, preſerve and enjoy the conveniences agreeable to that frame; and we naturally are ψυχικοὶ ἄνθρωποι, *animal men*; ſuch as naturally do apprehend, do affect, do purſue things con-
1 Cor. 2. 14. cerning

cerning this preſent life; the pleaſures of ſenſe, and the ſatisfactions of fancy; freedom from want and pain, ſecurity from danger and diſturbance, together with the means we ſuppoſe conducible to thoſe, wealth, honour and power; theſe are thoſe *deſires of the fleſh and of the mind*, the things which according to our natural temper and frame we like and approve; which moſt men therefore do highly value, paſſionately love, and earneſtly ſeek: Nor doth nature onely incline us to a complacence in theſe things, but cuſtomary fruition greatly endeareth them to us; ſo that we continually improve our acquaintance, and contract a firmer alliance with them; but ſpiritual and divine things (*the things of the Spirit of God*, as St. *Paul* calleth them) we cannot * *receive*, that is, ſimply of our ſelves, without aid of another interiour principle, we have no capacity to apprehend them, no diſpoſition to entertain them, no ſtrength to purſue them; they (as the *Apoſtle* ſaith) *are fooliſhneſs to us*, that is, incongruous to our prejudicate notions, and inſipid to our corrupt palates.

Θελήματα σαρκὸς καὶ τῆς διανοίας. Eph. 2. 3.

Τὰ τῦ πνεύματος τῦ θεῦ. 1 Cor. 2. 14.

* Δέχεσθαι.

Such doctrines as theſe; that our felicity conſiſteth not in affluence of temporal enjoyments, but in diſpoſitions of ſoul croſſing our humours, curbing our appetites, and quelling our paſſions; in conformity of practice to rules diſtaſtfull to our ſenſe; in the love and favour of an inviſible Being: in reverſion of an eſtate not to be poſſeſſed untill after our death in another world; that none of theſe preſent things do well deſerve our ſerious regard, affection or care, and that it is blamable to be ſolicitous about them; that naked goodneſs (how low, weak and poor ſoever) is to be choſen before all the ſpecious pomps and glories of this world; that the ſecret teſtimony of conſcience is to be preferred before all the approbation and applauſe of men; that the hope of future joy ſhould overſway the deſire of preſent moſt certain and ſenſible delights; that the loſs of all things may ſometime be deemed our greateſt gain, being contemned our higheſt honour, enduring afflictions our moſt deſirable condition, death our ſureſt welfare, a croſs preferible to a crown; that accordingly it is often advantageous and expedient for us, and a duty incumbent on us willingly to diſcard our deareſt contents of life, to ſacrifice our moſt valued intereſts, to forſake our neareſt relations, to refuſe what we moſt affect, to undertake what we moſt diſtaſt, to undergo without reluctancy or regret the moſt bitter accidents that can befall us; that we muſt (to uſe the *holy ſtyle*) *hate our own ſouls, deny our ſelves, and take up our croſs, quit houſes and lands, deſert kindred and friends*; ἀποτάσσεσθαι πᾶσι τοῖς ἑαυτῦ ὑπάρχουσι· *to renounce* (or bid farewell) *to all that he hath*, or owneth; *cut off our right hands, and pluck out our right eyes; circumciſe our hearts, mortifie our members; crucify our fleſh with its affections and luſts; be crucified to the world*; to *accompt all* worldly *things damage*, droſs, and *dung* in compariſon to ſpiritual goods. That we muſt ſo far remit and reſtrain our ſelf-love, as to love all men, not excluding our greateſt enemies, as our ſelves; ſo as not onely to part freely with our particular accommodations, but upon occaſion, in imitation of our Saviour, to *lay down our lives for them*; ſo as not onely to comport with their infirmities, but to requite their extremeſt injuries with good will and good turns; ſo as to doe all good to all men, to return no evil to any; *to bleſs them that curſe us, to doe good to them that hate us, to pray for them which deſpitefully uſe us, and perſecute us.*

John 12. 25. Luke 14. 26. 2. 13. Luke 14. 33. Matt. 16. 24. 5. 29. Col. 3. 5. Gal. 5. 24. 6. 14. Rom. 6. 6. Phil. 3. 7, 8.

Matt. 6. 44.

Theſe, and ſuch like dictates of the Spirit are *hard*, and harſh ſayings, abſurd to our natural conceit, and abominable to our carnal humour; we cannot readily ſwallow them, we cannot eaſily digeſt them; in reſpect to them

John 6. 60.

Col. 1. 21. them we as mere men are ἐχθροὶ τῇ διανοίᾳ, *enemies in our mind*, or reaſon; our diſcourſe preſently doth contradict and oppoſe them: Our reaſon is ſhut up, and barr'd with various appetites, humours and paſſions againſt ſuch truths, nor can we admit them into our hearts, except God by his Spirit do *ſet open our mind*, and work a free paſſage for them into us: it is *he who commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs*, muſt (as St. *Paul* ſpeaketh) *illuſtrate our hearts with the knowledge* of theſe things; an *Unction from the holy one*, clearing our eyes, ſoftning our hearts, healing our diſtempered faculties muſt (as St. *John* informeth us) *teach* and perſuade us this ſort of truths; a hearty faith of theſe ſeemingly incredible propoſitions muſt indeed be, as St. *Paul* calleth it, *the gift of God*, proceeding from that *Spirit of faith*, whereof the ſame *Apoſtle* ſpeaketh; ſuch faith is not (as St. *Baſil* ſaith) *engendred by Geometrical neceſſities, but by the effectual operations of the Holy Ghoſt: Fleſh and bloud will not reveal unto us, nor can any man* with clear confidence *ſay, that Jeſus* (the Authour, Maſter and Exemplifyer of theſe doctrines) *is the Lord*, (the *Meſſias*, the infallible Prophet, the univerſal Law-giver, the Son of the living God) *but by the Holy Ghoſt: Every Spirit, which* ſincerely *confeſſeth him to be the Chriſt*, who hath enjoined theſe Precepts, we may with St. *John* ſafely conclude to *be of God*; for of our ſelves *we are not ſufficient* (as the *Apoſtle* ſaith) λογίζεσθαί τι, *to reaſon out*, or collect any of theſe things; we never of our own accord, without divine attraction, ſhould *come unto Chriſt*, that is, ſhould effectually conſent unto, and embrace his inſtitution, conſiſting of ſuch unplauſible Propoſitions, and Precepts; hardly would his own Diſciples, who had ſo long enjoyed the light of his inſtruction and converſation, have admitted it, if he had not granted to them that *Spirit of truth*, whoſe work it was ὁδηγεῖν, to lead them in this unknown and uncouth way, ἀναγγέλλειν, to tell them again and again, that is, to inſtill and inculcate theſe crabbid truths upon them, ὑπομιμνήσκειν, to admoniſh, excite and urge them to the marking and minding them; hardly, I ſay, without the guidance of this Spirit would our Lord's Diſciples have admitted divers Evangelical truths, as our Lord himſelf told them; *I have* (ſaid *he*) *many things beſide to ſay to you, but ye cannot as yet bear them; but when he, the Spirit of truth ſhall come, he ſhall conduct you into all truth.*

Διανίγειν τὸν νοῦν. Luke 24. 45. Acts 16. 14. 2 Cor. 4. 6. 1 John 2. 27.

Eph. 2. 8. Phil. 1. 29. 1 Cor. 12. 9. Πνεῦμα τῆς πίστεως. 2 Cor. 4. 13. 1 Cor. 12. 9. Πίστις οὐκ ἐν γεωμετρικαῖς ἀνάγκαις, ἀλλ' ἢ τῷ πνεύματος ἐνεργείαις ἐγγινομένη. Baſ. *in* Pſ. 115. Matt. 16. 17. 1 Cor. 12. 3.

1 John 4. 2. 2 Cor. 3. 3, 5. John 6. 44. John 16. 13. 14. 26.

John 16. 12.

As for the mighty *Sages* of the world, the learned *Scribes*, the ſubtile *diſputers*, the deep politicians, the *wiſe men according to the fleſh*, the men of moſt refined judgment, and improved reaſon in the world's eye, they were more ready to deride, than to regard, to impugn, than to admit theſe doctrines; to the *Greeks who ſought wiſedom*, the preaching of them did ſeem *fooliſhneſs*.

1 Cor. 1. 20, &c.

It is true ſome few ſparks or flaſhes of this divine knowledge may poſſibly be driven out by rational conſideration; *Philoſophy* may yield ſome twilight glimmerings thereof; common reaſon may dictate a faint conſent unto, may produce a cold tendency after ſome of theſe things; but a clear perception, and a reſolute perſuaſion of mind, that *full aſſurance of faith*, and *inflexible confeſſion of hope:* which the Apoſtle to the *Hebrews* ſpeaketh of; that *all riches of the full aſſurance of underſtanding*, that *abundant knowledge of the divine will in all ſpiritual wiſedom and underſtanding*, with which St. *Paul* did

Πληροφορία τῆς πίστεως. Heb. 10. 22. Ὁμολογία τῆς ἐλπίδος ἀκλινής. Heb. 10. 23.

Πᾶς πλοῦτος τῆς πληροφορίας τῆς συνέσεως. Col. 2, 2. Col. 1. 9.

did pray that his *Coloſſians* might *be repleniſhed*; theſe ſo perfect illuſtrations of the mind, ſo powerfull convictions of the heart do argue immediate influences from the fountain of life and wiſedom, the divine Spirit: no external inſtruction could infuſe, no interiour diſcourſe could excite them; could penetrate thoſe opacities of ignorance, and diſſipate thoſe thick miſts of prejudice, wherein nature and cuſtome do involve us; could ſo thoroughly awaken the lethargick ſtupidity of our ſouls; could ſupple the refractary ſtiffneſs of our wills, could mollify the ſtony hardneſs of our hearts, could void our natural averſation to ſuch things, and quell that φρόνημα τ̃ σαρκὸς, *that carnal mind*, the which St. *Paul* ſaith *is enmity againſt God, for it is not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can be*; could depreſs thoſe ὑψώματα, thoſe *lofty towers* of ſelf-conceit, *reared againſt the knowledge of God*, and *demoliſh* thoſe ὀχυρώματα, thoſe *bulwarks* of ſelf-will and perverſe ſtomach oppoſed againſt the impreſſions of divine truth; and *captivate* πᾶν νόημα, *every conceit* and device of ours *to the obedience of Chriſt*, and his diſcipline: Well therefore did St. *Paul* pray in behalf of his *Epheſians*, that *God would beſtow on them that Spirit of wiſedom and revelation in the acknowledgement of him, and that the eyes of their mind* (or reaſon) *might be enlightned, ſo as to know the hope of their calling*; that is, to underſtand and believe the doctrines of Chriſtianity, which upon condition of obedience did promiſe felicity to them.

Rom. 8. 7.

2 Cor. 10. 4, 5.

Eph. 1. 17.

Τῆς διανοίας.

So is the light of ſpiritual knowledge, together with a temper of mind diſpoſing to receive it, communicated to us; but farther alſo by the ſame divine power and ſpirit are our vital heat and vigour, our active ſtrength and courage imparted. For as mere men we are not onely blind to diſcern, dull to conceive, backward to undertake the neceſſary duties of vertue and piety, but we are alſo dead, heartleſs and unwieldy, lame and impotent, indiſpoſed and uncapable to perform them: though we ſhould competently apprehend our duty, and our *ſpirit* thence ſhould be *willing*, yet *our fleſh*, or natural power, *is weak*; we may (as St. *Paul* inſtructeth us) in our judgment conſent that *the law is holy, juſt and good*; and conſequently *to will may be preſent to us*; that is, we may be deſirous, and in ſome meaſure reſolved to obey it; yea we may *have ſome interiour rational complacence therein*; and yet not have ability to act according to theſe dictates and deſires; for *to will is preſent to me* (ſaith he in the perſon of a man endewed onely with natural ſtrength, abſtracting from the ſubſidiary virtue and operation of the divine Spirit,) *but to perform that which is good, I find not*; I perceive not any means, or way of affecting it; knowledge therefore and willingneſs to doe good doth not ſuffice; we need a prevalent force to ſtir and raiſe this unwieldy bulk; to overpoiſe our natural propenſions, to ſubdue the reluctancies, and check the importunites of ſenſe, to correct bad nature, and reclaim from bad cuſtome: The natural might and policy of our ſingle reaſon, being very feeble and ſhallow, is not fitly matched to encounter that potent confederacy of enemies, which continually with open violence doth invade and aſſail us; or which by clandeſtine wiles doth watch to circumvent and ſupplant us: Is it eaſie for us not to dread the frowns, nor to be charmed by the flatteries; to ſlight both the hatred and favour; to abide the perſecutions, and to avoid the allurements of this world; this wicked, violent, deceitfull world, which is ever ready to deter from good, and entice us to evil? Is it eaſie to reſtrain and repreſs thoſe *fleſhly luſts*, *which* (as St. *Peter* ſaith)

Matt. 26. 41.

Rom. 7. 12, 16. Σύμφημι τῷ νόμῳ ὅτι καλός.

Rom. 7. 18. Συνήδομαι τῷ νόμῳ χ̃υ ἢ ἔσω ἄνθρωπον. Rom. 7. 22.

Rom. 7. 18. Τὸ δ̀ καταργαζέσθαι τὸ καλὸν οὐχ ὑρίσκω.

1 Pet. 2. 11. James 4. 1. *do war againſt our ſouls*, combating them with their own forces; uſing their own faculties and members as weapons againſt them? Is it eaſie to Rom. 7. 23. reſcue our ſelves from that *other law in our members, that warreth againſt the law of our underſtanding, and captivateth us to the law of ſin?* Is it a ſmall matter to ſet upon, to grapple with, to knock down that Gigantick *Philiſtine*, inordinate ſelf-love (the root of injuſtice, pride, envy, malice, ambition and avarice within us) which naturally is ſo tall and ſtout; which, if not checked in its progreſs, will daily grow in ſtature and ſtrength? Is it a ſlight buſineſs to detect, to counterplot, to decline or Eph. 6. 11. Ἡμῖν ἡ πάλη. defeat thoſe μεθοδείας, thoſe *devices*, or *ſubtile trains*, and ſleights of the Eph. 6. 12. Tempter; *to wreſtle with principalities, with powers, with the rulers of this darkſome world, with the ſpiritualities of wickedneſs*, ſurrounding us? may we not reaſonably in compariſon to theſe mighty *Anakim* be (as the chil- Num. 13. 33. dren of *Iſrael* anciently were) *in our own ſight as Graſhoppers*, quite deſpairing by our own ſtrength to vanquiſh, to reſiſt them?

In our ſpiritual conflict with ſuch dangerous and dreadfull adverſaries, Phil. 1. 19. we do need an ἐπιχορηγία τοῦ πνεύματος, (as St. *Paul* ſpeaketh, that is) *a large ſupply of the Spirit*, a collation of auxiliary forces, an habitual ſupport derived from that invincible and infallible ſpirit, which onely is Luke 24. 49. ſtronger, and wiſer than they; we need to be armed with that δύναμις (Eſa. 59. 19.) ἐξ ὕψους, that *power from on high*, or heavenly might, whereby the *Apoſtles* were enabled to fight their noble battles, and to atchieve their glorious conqueſts, ſubduing the rebellious world, and baffling the powers of dark- Eph. 3. 16. neſs; we need δυνάμει κραταιωθῆναι, *to be ſtrengthned with might by* Col. 1. 11. *Chriſt's ſpirit in the inward man*, as St. *Paul* expreſſeth it; whereby, as he, Phil. 4. 13. we may πάντα ἰσχύειν, be *able to doe all things*, or to accompliſh the moſt John 15. 5. difficult parts of our duty; without which *we can doe nothing*, that is, cannot diſcharge the moſt eaſie things required of us; 2 Cor. 3. 5. Phil. 2. 13. Col. 1. 12. *all our ſufficiency is of God*; it is he, who *out of his goodneſs doth effect in us both to will and to perform*; Τὸ πνεῦμα συναντιλαμβάνεται τῶν ἀσθενείας ἡμῶν —— Rom. 8. 26. his ſpirit *taking part with our infirmities*, and thereby giving us advantage over all oppoſition and difficul- 1 John 3. 9. ty. The chief reaſon why we *do not ſin*, or perſiſt in a courſe of diſobedi- 1 Pet. 1. 23. ence to the Laws of God, is, as St. *John* telleth us, *becauſe the divine ſeed abideth in us*, that root of divine life, and vital activity implanted in us by the Holy Spirit; that *divine nature* (as St. *Peter* ſtyleth it) that principle and ſpring of ſpiritual motion by him inſerted in us; from which onely *ſeed* or *nature* do ſprout all heavenly graces and vertues.

1 Pet. 2. 4. Θεία φύσις. *Vñ divinæ gratiæ, potentior utique natura.* Tertull.

The principal and original vertue, charity (*the root, the fountain, the mother of all goodneſs*, as Saint *Chryſoſtome* calleth it) even that *is ſhed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit given unto us*, as St. *Paul* telleth us; and *the fruit* (ſaith he) *of the Spirit is in all goodneſs, righteouſneſs and truth*; and, *Love, peace,* Gal. 5. 22. *long-ſuffering, benignity, goodneſs, faith, meekneſs, temperance* are by the ſame divine *Apoſtle* reckoned ſtreams from the ſame ſource, fruits of the ſame rich and goodly ſtock: To it generally are attributed all purification of our hearts, mortification of our luſts, ſanctification of our lives, and con- 1 Cor. 6. 11. ſequently ſalvation of our ſouls: *Ye* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *are waſhed, ye are ſanctified, ye are juſtified in the name of the Lord Jeſus, and by the ſpirit of* 2 Theſſ. 2. 13. *our God*; and, *God hath choſen us from the beginning to ſalvation by ſanctification*

Οὐ γάρ ἐστιν ἁμαρτημάτων ἀπαλλαγῆναι ἄνευ τῆς τοῦ πνεύματος ἐνεργείας. Chryſ.

Ῥίζα, καὶ πηγὴ, καὶ μήτηρ ἁπάντων τῶν ἀγαθῶν. Chryſ.

Rom. 5. 5. Eph. 5. 9.

ſification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth; and, *Having* (ſaith St. *Peter*) *purified our ſouls in obedience to the truth, by the Spirit, unto charity unfeigned*; and, *If* (ſaith St. *Paul* again) *by the Spirit ye mortify the deeds of the fleſh, ye ſhall live*; Thus doth our ſpiritual being and ſtate, together with our life and active powers depend upon the *Holy Spirit*; and not onely ſo, but

1 Pet. 1. 22. Rom. 8. 13.

3. The continued ſubſiſtence and preſervation, the actual uſe and exerciſe of them, all our diſcreet conduct, all our good practice do rely upon him: It is true of our ſpiritual no leſs than of our natural life. *If he doth avert his face, we are troubled; if he doth ſubtract his influence, we die and return unto our duſt:* upon all occaſions we do need his direction, aid and comfort; for *the way of man* (as the *Prophet* ſaith) *is not in himſelf, it is not in man that walketh to direct his ſteps*; *It is the Lord* (as the *Pſalmiſt* ſaith) *that ordereth the ſteps of a good man, and upholdeth him with his hand*; we have all need to pray with that good man; *Cauſe me to know the way, wherein I ſhould walk*; *teach me to doe thy will, for thou art my God*; *thy ſpirit is good, lead me into the Land of uprightneſs.*

Pſal. 104. 29. Jer. 10. 23. Pſal. 37. 23. Pſal. 143. 8, 10.

We are vain and uncertain in our opinions; fickle and irreſolute in our purpoſes, ſlow and heavy in our proceedings; apt to faint and faulter, to ſtumble and ſlip in all our practice; we do need therefore this ſure Oracle to conſult in our doubts and darkneſſes; this faithfull friend to direct and adviſe us in our affairs; this conſtant Monitour to rouſe, and quicken us in our undertakings; this powerfull Guardian to ſupport and eſtabliſh us in our ways; It is, in reſpect to good men, this ſteady hand that holdeth the helm, and gently ſteereth their courſe through the blind tracts of religious practice; withdrawing them from thoſe dangerous ſhelves of errour and temptation, upon which they are apt to ſplit; it is this heavenly gale, that filleth their ſails with conſtant reſolution, and fairly driveth them forward in their voyage toward eternal bliſs. He ſoftly doth whiſper and inſinuate good thoughts into us; doth kindle pious deſires, doth cheriſh vertuous intentions, doth promote honeſt endeavours; he ſeaſonably checketh and reſtraineth us from ſin; he faithfully reproveth and upbraideth us for committing it; he raiſeth wholſome remorſe, ſhame and diſpleaſure for our unworthineſs and folly; He ſweetly warmeth our cold affections, inflaming our hearts with devotion toward God; he qualifieth us, and encourageth us to approach the throne of grace, breeding in us faith and humble confidence, prompting us fit matter of requeſt, becoming our advocate and interceſſour for the good ſucceſs of our prayers; *Through Chriſt Jeſus* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *we have acceſs by one ſpirit unto the Father*; and, *The ſpirit helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we ſhould ask for as we ought, but the ſpirit it ſelf intercedeth for us.*

Eph. 2. 18. Rom. 8. 26.

He guardeth us, he ſtandeth by us, he ſuſtaineth us in all trials, and temptations, affording *grace ſufficient* to eſcape or to endure them; *not ſuffering us to be tempted above what we are able.*

2 Cor. 12. 9. 1 Cor. 10. 13.

He ſupporteth and comforteth us in our afflictions and diſtreſſes of all kinds, of our inward and outward eſtate: this *David* knew when in his penitential agonies he prayed, *Caſt me not away from thy preſence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me*; *reſtore unto me the joy of thy ſalvation, and uphold me with thy free ſpirit*; this thoſe *firſt Chriſtians* felt, who under perſecutions and all outward diſcouragements were yet *filled with joy*, and *did walk in the comfort of the Holy Ghoſt*; whence that teſtimony of St. *Paul* concerning the *Theſſalonians*; *Ye were followers of me, and of the Lord, receiving*

Pſal. 51. 12. Acts 13. 14. 9. 31, &c. 1 Theſſ. 1. 6.

receiving the word in much affliction with joy of the Holy Ghoſt; by it the bleſſed *Saints*, *Martyrs* and *Confeſſors* being inſpired did not onely with admirable patience, but incredible alacrity undergo the extremeſt loſſes, ignominies and tortures which the ſpite of hell, and rage of the world could inſiſt on them.

1 Pet. 1. 8. Rom. 15. 13. Heb. 3. 6.

It is in fine, this Holy Spirit, which is the ſole authour and ſpring of all true delight, of all real content within us; of that *unſpeakable joy in believing*, that *gayety of hope*, that ſatisfaction in well doing; the partaking of his ſociety, influence and conſolation is indeed the moſt delicious repaſt, and richeſt cordial of our ſoul; the neareſt reſemblance, the ſweeteſt foretaſt of Paradiſe.

So many, ſo great; yea far more, far greater than, ſhould the time give me leave, I could enumerate or expreſs, are the benefits accruing to us from this moſt excellent gift of God, by him gratiouſly conferred upon all good Chriſtians; for which we ſhould correſpondently endeavour with all our hearts to praiſe, and thank him; in all our lives to make gratefull and worthy returns for it; eſpecially by well uſing it to the greateſt purpoſes, for which it was beſtowed, of enabling us to ſerve God, of preſerving us from ſin, of conducting us to eternal ſalvation.

Luke 11. 33. John 7. 37, 38, 39.

Let us earneſtly invite this Holy gueſt unto us, by our Prayers unto him, who hath promiſed to beſtow his Spirit upon thoſe, which ask it; to impart *this living* ſtream to every one, which *thirſteth* after it; let us willingly receive him into our hearts, let us treat him with all kind uſage, with all humble obſervance. Let us not exclude him by ſupine neglect, or rude *reſiſtence*; let us not *grieve* him by our perverſe and froward behaviour toward him: let us not *tempt him* by our fond preſumptions, or baſe treacheries; let us not *quench* his heavenly light and heat by our foul luſts and paſſions: But let us admit gladly his gentle illapſes; let us hearken to his faithfull ſuggeſtions; let us comply with his kindly motions; let us demean our ſelves modeſtly, conſiſtently, and officiouſly toward him; that we may ſo doe, God of his infinite mercy grant unto us, through *Jeſus Chriſt our Lord*; to whom with the ſame *Holy Spirit* for ever be all glory, and praiſe. *Amen.*

Acts 7. 51. Eph. 4. 30. Iſa. 63. 10. Acts 5. 9. 1 Theſſ. 5. 19.

O God, the ſtrength of all them, that put their truſt in thee, mercifully accept our prayers; and becauſe through the weakneſs of our mortal nature we can doe no good thing without thee, grant us the help of thy grace, that in keeping of thy commandments we may pleaſe thee both in will and deed, through Jeſus Chriſt *our Lord.* Amen.

A TA-

A TABLE OF THINGS, or Chief MATTERS Contained in the Third Volume.

A.

ABraham. *His Faith, and Example*, page 16, 17.
Adam's *Sin and Puniſhment*, 382.
Chriſt, *the ſecond* Adam, 383.
Afflictions. *Their Original, and End*, 43. *Benefits of them*, 72, *how born*, 153. 159, 160.
Ἀπολογία. *The Import of the word*, Philip. IV. 11. 45.

B.

BAptiſm. 391. 407.
Baptiſm *and Faſting*, &c. *Of Chriſt, the End of them*, 31. *Divine Grace beſtowed in Baptiſm*, 452.
Biſhops, *and their Preſidency*, 238.

C.

CAllings, *as referred to Chriſtians*, 217. *The Reward of Induſtry therein*.
Canaanites. *The Divine Proceedings againſt them vindicated*, 358.
Cenſures *of the Primitive Church*, 255.
Cenſures *of men how born*, 129.
Ceremonies *of the Chriſtian Church*, 120.
Charity, 247. 250. 295. 316. 458, 459.
Charity. *How wrought in us*, 27. 130. *The delight therein*, 119, 120. *Directions concerning it*, 305.
Chriſt's Living, Abiding, Dwelling, being Formed in us; *The meaning of thoſe Expreſſions in H. Scripture*, 25.
Chriſt's *Example. The Tranſcendent Excellence and Power thereof*, 24. *his Divinity*, 30. 33. *Humanity* 384. *Sufferings*, 393, &c.
Church *Governours and Government*, 236. *Obedience to them in* ſeq. *Diſcipline*, 240. 254, 255.
Civility, *and Courteſie. Non-compliance therein by whom thought to bring an Imputation on Religion*, 335, &c.
Clemens Romanus *called by* Clemens Alexandrinus *an Apoſtle*, 395. *A Character of his Epiſtle to the* Corinthians. Ibid. Euſebius *and S.* Hierom's *Note of its being anciently read in Churches.* Ibid.
Compliance. *Baſe Compliance*, 326.
Company. (*Good*) *A Remedy againſt Diſcontent*, 95.
Company. (*Bad*) *The Danger, and Remedy*, 326.

Conſcience. (*Good*) *The Comfort*, 91, 92. 115. 118.
Conſideration. *The Benefits*, 97.
Converſation, *and outward Demeanour, the great Care to be had thereof on a Religious, and Civil Account*, 304, &c.
Of Contentment, 44, *&c. The Neceſſity. Arguments to it. The Nature and way to it.*
Covetouſneſs. *Remedies againſt it*, 136. 148.
Courage, *enflamed by Example*, 21.
Curioſity. *The Power*, 23.
Cuſtom. 135. 307. 335. 337. *in Sin: the Danger*, 162. 166.

D.

DEacons, 241.
Death, 140. *Benefits*, 155. 77, 78. *Conquered by Chriſt*, 417. *The wiſedom to Philoſophers in Contemplation thereof.*
Death *of Friends*, 66, 67.
Death. *No Knowledge after Death of Things done in this World*, 150.
Degrees *of Rewards hereafter*, 178.
Delay *in Matters of Religion. The Danger*, 165, &c.
Deluge, (*Univerſal*) 357.
Deſpair, 74.
Detraction. *Fear thereof how prejudicial to Religion*, 332.
Diſhonour, *how born*, 64, 65.
Diſcipline, *of the Primitive Church*, 240. 254, 255.
Devotion, (*Publick and Private*) 307, 308.
Devotion. *An Excellent Means of Contentment*, 93.

E.

ECcleſiaſtical *Government*, 245.
Eccleſiaſtical *Orders. Their Antiquity, and Diſtinction*, 233.
Empires. *Their Ruine from Neglect of Religion*, 338.
Emulation. *Power thereof to Vertue*, 21.
Endeavours (*Our Own*) *Neceſſary to Happineſs*, 36. 188, 189.
Enemies. *Love of Them*, 52. 55. 102, 103, &c. 386.
Enemies. *A Chriſtian's Enemies, how conquered by Chriſt*, 414, &c.
Enemies *of Religion*, 36. 57.
Envy, 329.
Evil-ſpeaking, 129.
Examination. *The Duty*, 125.
Example. *Humane Example; no ſure Pattern*, 28, 29.
Example. *The Power*, 34.
Examples *of Piety, how they exceed all others in Valour*, 24.
Examples. *The Delight in conſidering them*, 24.
Example *of Chriſt. The Neceſſity of the Imitation*, 415. *V.* 446, *we are to give, and follow good Example*, 14, 15. *The Advantages, and how much Examples exceed Precepts, in* ſeq.
Example. (*Publick*) *The Power and Practice*, 315.

F.

FAith, 5, 6. *The Power, and Neceſſity.*
Faith *in God. The Benefit*, 98.
Faith. *Open Confeſſion thereof*, 116, 117. 313.
Faith. *The Foundation of Joy*, 117.
Faith. *Implicit Faith*, 268, 269.
Fathers *of the Church*, 264.
Favour *of God. The Happineſs*, 70.
Fear *of God*, 336, &c.
Fear. *The Prejudice to Religion from baſe Fear*, 357.
Feſtival. (*Jewiſh and Chriſtian*) *their Inſtitution, Correſpondence, and End*, 422. 447, 448.
Flattery, 130, *how avoided*, 319.
Floud. (*Univerſal*) *The Goodneſs of God therein*, 357, &c.
Fortune, *and Chance*, 47.
Friendſhip *obtained and preſerved by Religion*, 324.

G.

GEntleman's *Calling, and Duty to be induſtrious*, 217, &c.
Ghoſt. *Gift of the Holy Ghoſt, the Benefits*, 447, &c.

Gift *of God in Scripture, whence ſometimes ſaid to be the Effect of Man's Induſtry*, 188.
Glorifying *God*, 309, 311.
God's *Attributes*, 113, 226.
God's *Exiſtence*, 349.
Of the Goodneſs, *the Patience of God*, 348.
Goſpel. *Some Nations Ignorance thereof, no Argument againſt Divine Providence, or Univerſal Redemption by Chriſt*, 395.
Governours, *and Guides Spiritual*, 236, &c.
Grace *of God. The Danger of not asking, and uſing the ſame*, 172, 173. *V.* 396.
Grace. *Communication and Effects in Heathen*, 399.
Grace. *When a Perſon in a State of Grace*, 418, 419.
Great *men. Their Conditions in this World*, 85.

H.

HAppineſs. *Future Happineſs. Degrees therein*, 92, 93. 178.
Happineſs. *Conſideration of Future Happineſs, a ſovereign means of Content*, 92.
Happineſs (*Future*) *ſought after from Remembrance of this Lifes ſhortneſs, and vanity*, 56. 194.
To Hear, *in Scripture-language is to obſerve attentively*, 123.
Hearers. *The Character of truly Religious Hearers*, 296.
Heart *to be kept with all Diligence*, 121. *The Heart by whom ſuppoſed to be the chief Seat of the Soul*, 122.
Hereſie, 269.
Hieruſalem. *Deſtruction thereof, no Argument againſt Providence*, 360, 361.
Holy Life *how advanced*, 134, 138. *From conſideration of our Hearts, and Chriſt's Example*, 26.
Honeſty *and Publick Behaviour*, 302.
Honour *and Reputation of the World*, 144, 145. 375.
Honour *in Religion*, 375. 431.
Honour *how attained and kept*, 201. 221.
Hope, 75. 198.
Hope *in God*, 5. 118.
Hope *Reviſed by Example*, 20.
Humility, 96. 131, 132. 226. 298. 285.
Hypocrites, 325. 383. 334. 346.

I.

I *Can do all things through Chriſt that ſtrengtheneth me*, Philip. 4. 13.---7.
Jeſus. *The Name, and Extent of the Salvatiom by Him, and whence*, 455.
Idleneſs. *The Miſery*, 95.
Jews *Diſ-eſteem of Chriſt*, 107, 108, 109. *Their Rejection by God*, 225.
Ignorance *in this State*, 226. 228, 229.
Ignorance. *Miſchiefs ariſing from Ignorance of our ſelves*, 127.
Ignorance *of Mankind before Chriſt's Coming*, 428.
Imitation *of Chriſt*, 15, &c.
Impartiality. *A Divine Attribute*, 365, &c.
Indifferency *in Matters of Religion, the Danger*, 346.
Induſtry. *Nature thereof, and Arguments to it*, 184, &c.
Injuries. *Chriſt the Example of bearing them, and our Duty of Imitation*, 99.
Intentions. *The beſt* alone *unavailable*, 4.
Joſeph's *Example. The Power*, 17.
Joy. *True Joy wherein*, 113. 422.
Iſraelites. *God's great Goodneſs to them in his Judgments*, 358.
Judgment (*Future*) 42. 164. 175. *All to appear*, 374.
Judgments *of Almighty God, the Unſearchableneſs of them*, 225, &c.
Juſtice *of God*, 365.
Juſtice *to our Neighbour*, 316, &c.

K.

KIngs. *The Honour and Obedience to them*, 378.
Knowledge. *Secular Knowledge. The Imperfection, Vanity when ſeparated from Religious Performances*, 150. 285.

Knowledge *how gained*,205. 221. 264.
Knowledge. *Divine Knowledge*, 57. 126. 219. *The Delight, and other Benefits*, 200, 201.
Knowledge *of our ſelves, the Benefits therein*, 125.

L.

LEarning. *V. Knowledge.*
Laws. *Humane Laws*, 139.
Laws. *Man governed by them*, 124.
Life. *Shortneſs thereof*, 77. *Uſe of this Conſideration, and of our latter End*, 140. Et in ſeq.
Life. *To know the fixed Time thereof thought no fit Subject of Prayer*, 141.
Life *Preſent, and Future compared*, 157.
Life. (*Preſent*) *A State of Probation*, 82.
Life. (*Wicked*) *The Scandal, and Danger*, 313.
Life. *An H. Life*, 455.
Love. *The Power*, 34.
Love *of our Neighbour*, 2. 96. 361.
Loving *of God. The Duty, and Joy there is in it*, 119, &c.

M.

MArtyrdom, 332.
Magiſtrates, 378, 379.
Mercy *of God in Pardon of Sin*, 348, &c.
Merit. *All pretended Merit diſclaimed*, 5, 6. 9. 60, 61, 62. 285, 286.
Midraſh, *or Myſtical Senſe in the Old Teſtament, the Ancient* Jew's *conſtant Belief thereof*, 441.
Miniſters *of the Goſpel. Their Character, and Titles*, 263. *The Duty of their Hearers*, 259. *The Influence of Miniſter's Example*, 271, 272.
Miracles, 199.
Modeſty, *how preſerved by Example*, 23, *what kind blameable*, 326.
Monarchy, *and Democracy*, 272.
Moſes's *Example*, 17, 18. *The Power thereof.*

N.

NAme. *What is ſignified by doing any thing in another's Name*, 1. *All to be done in Chriſt's Name.* Ib.
Name. *A good Name attained by being Religious*, 321.
Nativity *of Chriſt*, 422.
Neceſſity, *and Chance*, 74.
Novations, *and Pelagians; their Pretentions to Perfection, and Purity noted*, 286.

O.

OBedience *to God*, 165, 166, *muſt be univerſal*, 309.
Omniſcience *of God*, 350.
Omnipreſence *of God. The Reſtraint on Sin thence*, 138.
Ordination, 239, &c.
H. Orders *among the* Jews.
Original *Sin*, 6. 350, &c.

P.

PAgans. *Their State with Reference to receiving Divine Grace*, 399. *and whether ſuch Grace conſiſtent with the Want of an Explicit Knowledge of Chriſt, and Faith in him*, 400. in ſeq.
Paſſion *of Chriſt. The infinite Merit thereof*, 393. *The ſame foretold in the Old Teſtament*, 435.
Patience, *and how learnt*, 99. *St.* Paul's *Character and Example*, 18.
Peace *in Religion*, 113.
Pelagians, 452.
Pentecoſt. *The Feaſt*, 448, *how obſerved by the* Jews *of old*, 449.
Performances *to be judged by their Natures, not by contingent Events*, 394.
Perſecution, 332.
Perſeverance *in Religion*, 344.
Pleaſures *of the World. The Vanity*, 97. 149.
Poor. *God his peculiar care of them*, 374.
Poverty. *How born*, 64.
Power. *Worldly Power, the Character of it*, 144.
Power *in God only originally, and eſſentially*, 3, 4.
Practice *of Religion ſhewed from Examples*, 21.
Prayer, 135. *Its Power*, 93, 94. *What to pray for*, 136, 137. *To be offered to God alone in the Name of Chriſt*, 8, 9. *The Neceſſity of Prayer*, 10, 11.
Prayer. *The Benefit againſt Diſcontent*, 93.

Prayer *promoted by Knowledge of our ſelves*, 133.
Prayers. *Whence to be made for all Men*, 385.
Predeſtination, 376.
Prejudice, 33. 36, 37. 97. 259. 409. 456.
Peſumptuous. *This World made for them. A ſaying of the* Rabbins, 88.
Pride, 298. 300.
Prieſts, 238. *Or Presbyters.*
Profeſſion. *Outward Profeſſion only unavailable*, 3, 4.
Promiſes *of the Goſpel*, 117. 188.
Prophanation *of God's Name by a wicked Life*, 311, &c.
Prophecies *and Types of Chriſt*, 436, &c.
Prophets. *Ancient Prophets*, 266.
Proſperity *of the Wicked*, 80. 146. *No Argument againſt Divine Providence*, 146.
Proſperity. *The Miſeries if without Vertue*, 73.
Provide *Things honeſt in the ſight of all Men.* Rom. 12. 17. 30.
Providence *of God*, 6, 7. *Truſt therein*, 288, 289. *V.* 58. 350.
Providence. (*Unſearchable*) 227. *Inferences thence*, 234, 235.
Publick. *What Duties to be publickly performed*, 306, 307.
Purgatory, *A Fable*, 78.
To Put on Chriſt; *the Explanation of the Phraſe in H. Scripture*, 25.

R.

REdemption *by Chriſt*, 8. *Univerſal*, 397. Et in ſeq. *The mighty Love therein.*
Regeneration, 454.
Rejoyce Evermore. 1 *Theſſ.* 5. *v.* 16. 112.
Religion. *The Practice whence eaſy*, 113. 193.
Remiſſion *of Sins*, 172, &c.
Repentance, 113. *Danger of the Delay*, 165, &c.
Reproach. *Undergone by the Knowledge of our ſelves*, 133.
Reproach. *The vain Fear of being reproached for the Sake of Religion*, 358.
Reputation *in Religion*, 321.
Reſignation *of the Will*, *V. Will*, 41, &c.
Reſolution, 21. 133, 332.
Retirement, 316.
Revenge, *and Love of our Enemies*, 52. 55. 102, 103.
Rewards. (*Future*) 92. *Degrees thereof*, 78.
Riches. 146, 147, 189, *how gained, with their Advantages*, 217, 218.
Be not Righteous *over much*, Eccleſ. 7. 18. *The fooliſh Plea ſome aſſume from thence*, 346.

S.

SAcraments, 391.
Sacrilege, 224.
Saints. *The Power of their Example*, 25. *Who ſo called*, 311.
Saviour *of all Men*, &c. 379. *What the Term Salvation implies*, Ibid.
Schiſmaticks, 242, *&c.*
Scholars *Calling*, 220. Et in ſeq.
Scoffing *at Religion.*
H. Scriptures. *The Rule of Faith and Manners*, 29. *How they are to be taught and heard*, 229. *An Earneſt Exhortation to the Study of them, and Practice*, 125. 269, *and the Duty of ſearching.*
Self-conceit. *The Sin*, 279.
Self-confidence *and Complacence*, 288, 289.
Self-intereſt, 288.
Self-Love. *The Kinds of it*, 129, *and how to be avoided*, 301.
Self-Praiſe, *and thinking of our ſelves*, 299, 300.
Self-Will, 288.
Servants *of Chriſt who, and why?* 3.
Shame *in Sin*, 170, 171. 330. 332.
Sin. *The Miſery*, 95.
Sincerity, 163.
Singularity. *Fear of Imputation thereof in Matters of Religion, and the Folly*, 340, 341.
Sloth, 175.
Society. *The Good thereof*, 294.
Society's *Flouriſh by Obſervation of Religion*, 322.
Socinians, 452.
Solomon. *The Account of his Wiſedom*, 221, &c.

Stoicks. *Their Doctrines, and Example*, 153.
Soul *of Man. Motions thereof how ordered*, 138, 139. *The Duty, and Neceſſity of caring for the Soul*, 233, &c.
Soul's *Activity*, 12.
H. Spirit *of God*, 396. 450, *and Gifts*, 451.
Spiritual *Guides, and Governours*, 237, &c.
Sufferings *of Chriſt in the Old Teſtament*, 135.
Sufferings *of Chriſt*, 38, 39, 40.
Synods.

T.

TAlents. *Their Improvement*, 216. So teach us to number our Days, *Pſ.* XC. 12—140. *The full Importance of the Words.*
Temperance, 194.
Temptations, 37, *how conquered*, 458.
Thankſgiving, 9. 58, 59.
Thoughts, 124. 186, *how they work on the Affections*, 12. *Government of the Thoughts*, 140.
Time. *Improvement thereof*, 161. 179. *The Wiſedom therein.* Ibid.
Times. (*Good and Bad*) 67, 68.
Tongue. *Government of the Tongue*, 53. 101.
Tradition. *Univerſal Tradition*, 240.
Truſt *in God*, 5. 117.
Truth. *Diſcovery thereof*, 407.
Types (*Ancient*) *and Prophecies, whence it pleaſed Almighty God to make uſe of them*, 435, 436.

V.

VAin-glory, 296.
Vertue *attained by Induſtry, and inſeparable from it*, 192. 211.
Vertue *and Vice. The Advantages of the former with relation to this Life, as well as the next*, 182, 183.
Union *with Chriſt*, 26, &c.
Unity. *Church Unity*, 247.
Uſe. *Popular Uſe, no good Argument of Truth or Right*, 326.

W.

WAtchfulneſs, 123.
How the Will *of God* our Sanctification, 41.
Will. *Freedom thereof*, 36, 37.
Will. *Submiſſion to the Divine Will*, 35, &c. 41.
Be wiſe as Serpents, *Matt.* 10. 16. 346.
Wiſedom, 191. *How attained.*
Wiſedom *of God*, 47.
Wiſedom. *Worldly Wiſedom*, 346.
World. *A Character of this World*, 79. 143.
World's *Creation, and Harmony declare the Divine Providence*, 350.
Worldly-mindedneſs, 76. 147. *An Occaſion of Diſcontent*, 96.
Works. *Rewards hereafter according to them*, 368.
Worſhip. *The Publick Worſhip of Almighty God*, 306.

Y.

YOuth, *and Old-age*, 130, 131. *compared with regard to Religious Practice*, Ibid.

Z.

ZEal, 339, 396.

THE END.

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v. 3